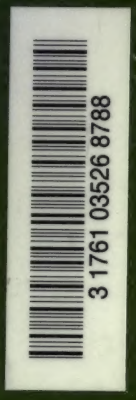
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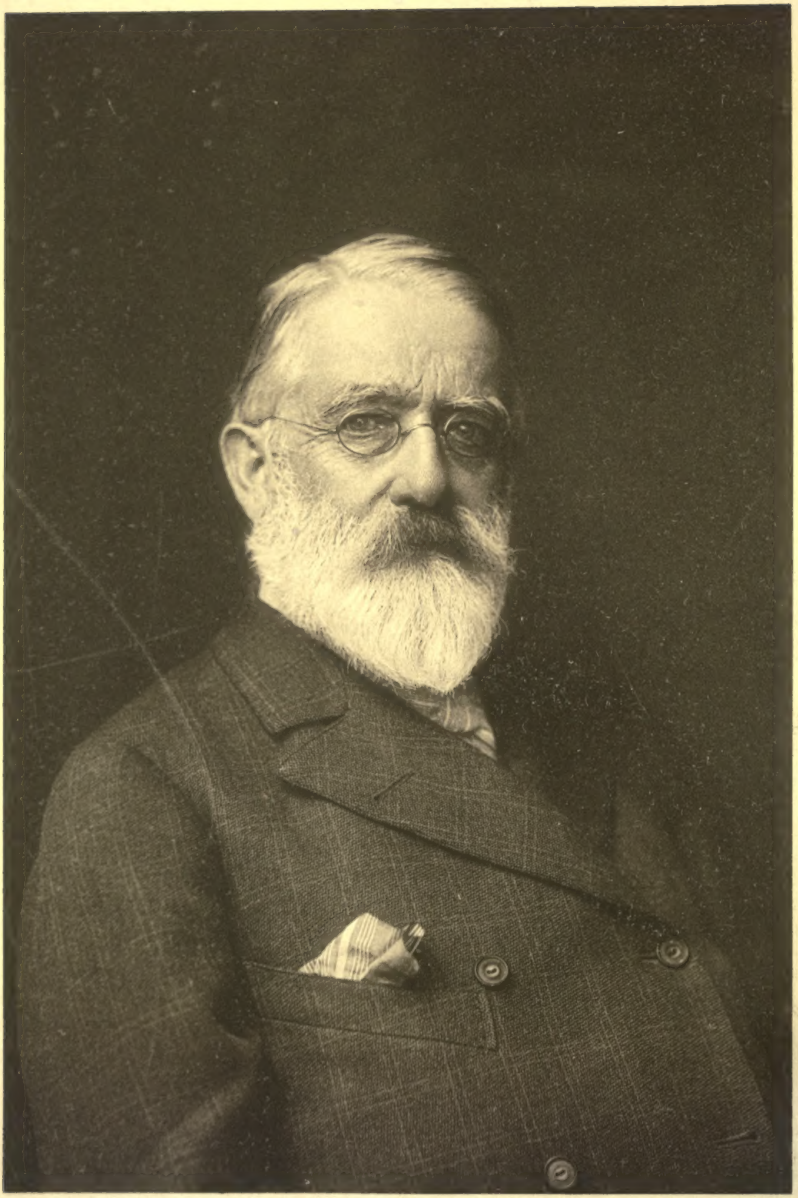
CHESS IN ICELAND



CHESS IN ICELAND

AND IN

ICELANDIC LITERATURE

WITH HISTORICAL NOTES ON

OTHER TABLE-GAMES

BY

WILLARD FISKE

68877
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FLORENCE
THE FLORENTINE TYPOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY
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PREFACE

The story of its compilation may explain, although it may not excuse the mongrel character and untidy arrangement of this volume. Many years ago, at an age when neither the author's acquaintance with Icelandic literature nor his familiarity with the game of chess was in any wise commensurate with his interest in these subjects, he wrote and published two brief articles concerning chess-play in Iceland. * The periodical of very restricted circulation in which these essays appeared has long been out of print, and is rarely to be found either in private or public collections of books. Certain circumstances determined the writer to reprint them for limited distribution in Iceland. Upon reading them in the printer's proofs, their meagreness and defects became markedly evident; thereupon some omitted incidents in the history of the game in the northern island were hurriedly written out, and added to the earlier matter. Subsequently, in the same planless way, further passages illustrative of the subject, discoverable in the older or newer literature, a number of notes on the terminology of the game, especially as it is represented in Icelandic lexicography, and various other items of greater or less interest, were likewise appended. While making these hasty studies and additions, the knotty question of *hnefatafl*, or *knottafl*, came up, and led to a desire to ascertain what that mysterious sport, mentioned at such an early period, really was, or, at least, what it was not. Editors and commentators of the old northern monuments are, in the first place, divided in opinion as to whether the word just cited represents the same game or two different diversions; in the second place, they have

* Compare pp. 1 and 10 of the present volume.
ED.

explained or translated these vocables in many varying ways — as chess, draughts, backgammon, fox-and-geese, and so on. In order to learn whether any of these still practised sports resemble the extinct northern one (or ones), it was deemed essential to devote, preliminarily, a few pages to the history and nature of the different table-games which were introduced during the early ages into Germanic Europe. It was found, however, at the very outset of this investigation, that, except in the case of chess, the historical accounts which had been compiled, in any country, in regard to those games, were of the slightest character and of little note or value; from this sweeping statement are only to be excluded the contents of the second part of Thomas Hyde's noteworthy treatise, "De ludis orientalibus," which saw the light just before the close of the seventeenth century. But that scholar devoted comparatively brief space to the games in vogue in central and northern Europe, confining his enquiries, for the most part, to the lands of the East, and to the two classical countries of the Mediterranean. Other tractates on Greek, Latin and Asiatic games are, like Hyde's book, very generally in Latin, and have thus not been generally available to the compilers of manuals treating of these pastimes. In addition to the not inconsiderable bibliography of printed literature in connection with this topic, the remarkable manuscripts relating to mediaeval table-games, now known to be preserved in several European libraries, had, in a casual manner, come to the cognizance of the writer. Their existence was, for a long time, a sealed fact to most scholars; few indeed had examined their pages — brilliant with the highest art of the illuminator — and of these few, none, so far as is known, had carried their studies beyond the portions devoted to the venerable game of chess. It is, moreover, less than half a century since the groups of codices at Rome and Florence, in some respects the most important of all, were alluded to in any printed publication, while the one housed within the monastic walls of the Escorial, which owes its execution to Alfonso the Wise of Spain, had never been critically treated, even as to its chess section, until within the last decade or two; while its accounts of other table-games in use in the thirteenth century have remained up to now a field untilled by the investigator.

The author, in pursuit of his purpose, began a cursory examination of such of these documentary relics as were within his reach, and of such printed sources, hitherto unfamiliar to him, as might cast any light on his subject. The result was that a considerable amount of material, little of which had as yet found its way into manuals of games or into encyclopædias, fell into his hands. To all this it seemed essential to add some slender notices of the mode or modes of practising each variety of these old amusements, in the hope that the changes which they had undergone, from time to time, might be traced, and a fairly complete idea of the terminology used in connection with them, at different periods, might be gathered and studied. For it is from a comparison of the technical terms belonging to them, the precise signi-

fications and probable etymologies of such words, that we can hope to derive more thorough information as to the origin, development and spread of the game; and, despite his own light success, the writer is still convinced that a closer scrutiny of these elements, and a more careful search into their relations to each other, at various ages and in various languages, will not only enable us to clear up, partially at least, the many lacunæ in our knowledge of the beginning and growth of this social diversion, but will result in a valuable contribution to universal folk-lore, as well as to our knowledge of a not uninteresting field embracing both oriental and occidental linguistics.

The interest of the writer in these new researches, as they went on, was greatly spurred so that he wholly abandoned for a time the theme with which he had set out, and suddenly devoted himself to this other which had obtruded itself upon his notice. So absorbing did the novel subject become that, in the end, it has grown to occupy the whole remaining part of this first volume and rendered a second necessary, if so be that the author is to complete the treatment of Iceland's part in chess history and chess letters. The absurdity of the extraordinary and extravagant course thus pursued is quite plainly evident to the author himself. It is as if a cook, starting to make a pasty and having partly completed it, should end by turning it into a pudding, or as if a scribbler, having begun a poem on love or some other fine emotion of the heart, should suddenly try to transform it into a dissertation on affections of the liver.

The specially regrettable thing in regard to the work is that neither of the two matters discussed has been handled with proper fullness and thoroughness. This is partially owing to the way in which the compilation has been made. From the beginning, whenever an amount of copy sufficient to fill a printed sheet was prepared, it was at once sent to the press; and this inconsiderate and eccentric method of composition is the cause, to a great extent, of the repetitions and other imperfections which will be found, thick-strewn, in the following pages. The author, then, cannot pretend that he has presented a satisfactory sketch of Icelandic chess; nor does he flatter himself that he has done more for the other table-games than to call attention to certain historical sources, which demand investigation by younger and less occupied hands. These games, always of a minor importance when compared with chess, but most of them nevertheless as old as civilization, and as widespread as human culture, have hitherto been dealt with, as to their historical position, if so dealt with at all, by scholars who had little practical familiarity with the games themselves, or by professional compilers who were utterly unconversant with the ways and means of scholarly research — in other words by investigators who were not players, or by players who were not investigators. In fact, if we except chess, no table-game has had any adequate notice given to its origin or history except by writers or in writings not easily accessible to the general *littérateur*. Lexicology,

especially, as this book abundantly shows, is rich in singular errors, and striking by equally singular omissions, in its attempts to illustrate the technical words and phrases belonging to these widely disseminated recreations.

. . . . . .

The second volume will contain, it is hoped, a detailed account and discussion of the *hnefatafl* matter; a list of Icelandic chess proverbs and sayings; notes on the carved chessmen and other chess objects found in the Museums of Scandinavia and England, commonly regarded as the productions of Icelandic workshops; reprints of Dr. Van der Linde's article on Icelandic chess, published in 1874 in the *Nordisk Skaktidende*, of two brief articles relating to chess in Iceland for the *Deutsche Schachzeitung*, and of the complete Icelandic text of Ólafur Davíðsson's paper on chess in his "Íslenzkar Skemtanir"; and will close with a Scandinavian chess bibliography with notes, compiled in Icelandic but never yet published. . . . .

[WILLARD FISKE]

Thus far the preface, written in the last weeks of the author's life. An additional pencilled memorandum indicates his intention to acknowledge with his thanks the help and counsel which he had received from various sources. May this brief mention reach those friends whom he had in mind!

The proof sheets of the present volume were examined by Mr. Fiske through page 344. During the summer of 1904 he was engaged on the preface, and at the time of his death, Sept. 17, 1904, he had compiled a portion of the index, and had corrected the first proofs for the final pages. The work has been concluded with the assistance of Mr. George W. Harris, Librarian of Cornell University, and Mr. Halldór Hermannsson of Reykjavík, who were testamentarily named for this purpose. The latter has revised and completed the index itself.

A reproduction of the latest photograph of Mr. Fiske, taken in April, 1904, forms the frontispiece. The original frontispiece selected by the author, who had not even placed his name on the title page, directly precedes the text. An eminent English authority on chess, Dr. Harold J. R. Murray, identifies it as appearing on the title page of an Italian work published at Milan in 1829, and entitled: "Volgarizzamento del libro de' costumi e degli officii de' nobili sopra il giuoco degli scacchi di frate Jacopo da Cessole tratto nuovamente da un codice Magliabechiano". The preface

of this work states that the illustrations were copied from an older edition of the same work entitled: "Libro di giuoco di Scacchi intitolato de costumi degl' huomini, et degli officii de nobili. Impresso in Firenze per maestro Antonio Miscomini Anno MCCCCLXXXXIII." Dr. Murray also quotes Van der Linde's description of the aforesaid work in his "Geschichte und Litteratur des Schachspiels", 1874, I., Beilagen, p. 123.

Some of the material already collected for the second volume may appear later in the annual publications relating to Iceland, to be issued by Cornell University on the foundation left by the author.

It is further the purpose of the undersigned, as literary executor, to publish a collection of reprints of the tales and sketches composed by Mr. Fiske in 1857–61 for the *Chess Monthly;* and in a memorial volume which has been planned, some account will be given of Mr. Fiske's devotion to the game of chess and his efforts to advance its interests.

HORATIO S. WHITE.

VILLA LANDOR.
FLORENCE, MARCH, 1905.

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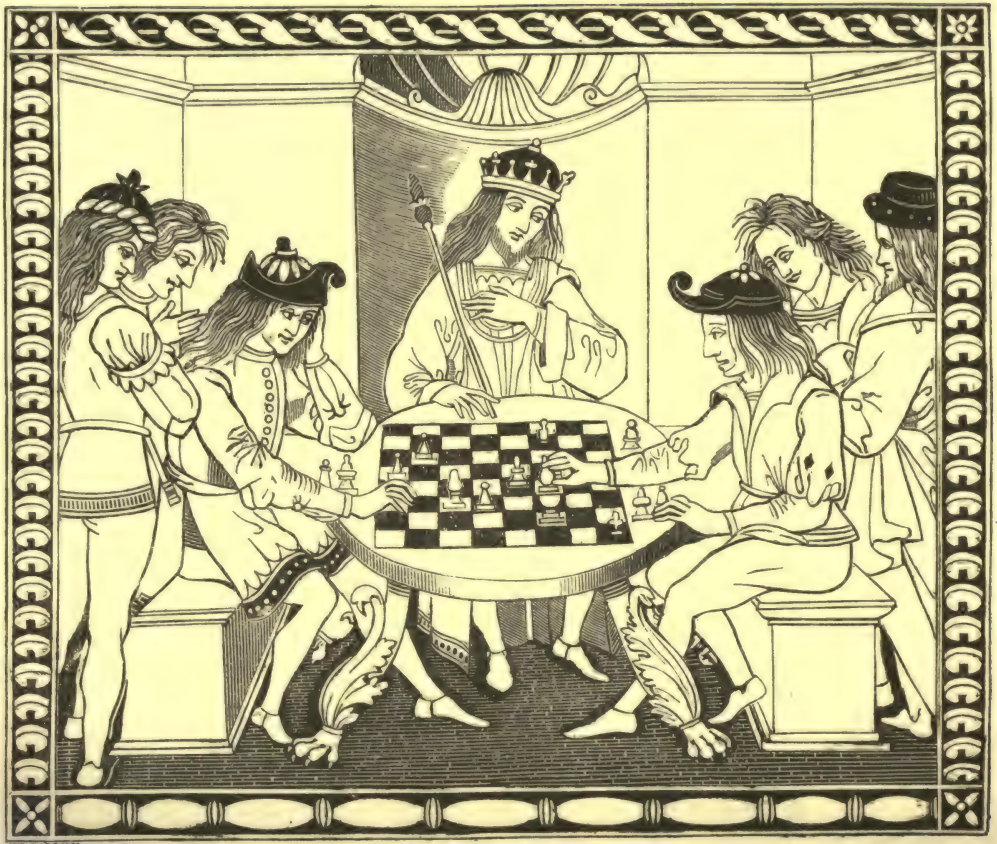


BONGINI. FIRENZE

THE GAME OF CHESS

IN THE

LAND AND LITERATURE

OF

ICELAND

1. — Polar Chess.[1]

The island of Iceland is an anomaly and a marvel—an anomaly in its natural history, for almost everywhere in its domain we find the living fierceness of volcanic heat coping with the death-like desolation of Arctic cold; and a marvel in its political history, which exhibits the spectacle of a pagan people, at an age preceding the morning of modern civilization on the mainland of Europe, building up, without any aid from the jurisprudence or polity of Rome, a complex but consistent code of laws, and a remarkable system of self-government, in which both the rights of the individual and the general good of the community were cautiously cared for. In the ingenious minds of its early lawmakers originated the existing form of trial by jury—that palladium of personal liberty; while the people themselves, sprung from the best blood of mountainous Norway, whose inborn love of freedom had sent them to the distant oceanic isle, created, as if by an impulse of instinct, a representative parliament, the yearly sessions of which took place, almost without a break, for nearly nine hundred years; so that its legitimate successor—the present Althing—may boast of being, by some centuries, the oldest legislative body in the world. The classic writers of the Commonwealth thus established, bequeathed to posterity many delightful pictures of the wonderful life of the unique insular nationality, and of that of their kin in the other Scandinavian lands—narratives scarcely excelled in literature for minute and characteristic detail. The old Icelandic poetry, too, from that sublime mythological and legendary epic, the so-styled Elder Edda, down to the elaborately wrought longer Skaldic lays, and the briefer, metrical impromptus and epigrams—witty, dashing, biting—scattered throughout the sagas, markedly displays the fact that the imagination is not alone excited by the genial air, the spicy perfumes and the luxuriant nature of the South, but glows with fervor even in the rocky, treeless, icy North. Like the very earliest blossoms of the Northern temperate zone—such as the winter-born trailing-arbutus and the modest hepatica—the flowers of poesy bloom even amid the snows.

[1] See the *Chess Monthly*, (New York 1857), I., pp. 201-205.

In the chronicles, the romances, the poetic productions of Iceland there are many allusions to chess. Certain of the romancers do not hesitate to put allusions to chess, or some similar game, into the mouth of all-father Odin himself.[2] Archæologists, who have made the island's antiquities an object of their research, travellers who have visited the country, and various native authors themselves are all agreed in the assertion that the game has been, for several centuries, esteemed and practiced in the land of the Geysers. The Icelandic chess-nomenclature indicates—as will be more particularly noted hereafter—that a knowledge of the sport reached the island, at a very early day, by way of Great Britain, while the variations introduced into its practice—such as giving different values to different sorts of checkmate—show that it soon became a favorite winter-evening diversion in the farmsteads of the Northern land. From one of the best-known books of travel in Iceland,[3] published in the last century, and the more trustworthy because its authors were natives of the soil they traversed, we are able to glean some particulars relative to the peculiarities of the Icelandic game.

[2] In the famous riddles of the "Hervarar saga," propounded by the disguised Odin. The game referred to is *hnefatafl*.

[3] This work, not only well known, but even yet the best record of travels relating to Iceland—the best, because it was the work of two broadly intelligent natives of the island—is:—"Vice-Lavmand Eggert Olafsens og Land-Physici Biarne Povelsens Reise igiennem Island, foranstaltet af Videnskabernes Sœlskab i Kiøbenhavn, og beskreven af forbemeldte Eggert Olafsen, med dertil hørende 51 Kobberstøkker og et nyt forfærdiget Kart over Island. Sorøe, 1772." The whole narrative was written by the first-named of the two travellers, Eggert Ólafsson, scientist, economist, poet, patriot—in many respects the most notable Icelandic figure of the eighteenth century, whose comparatively short life was one of great activity. He and his companion, Bjarni Pálsson, surgeon-general of Iceland, spent the years 1752-1757 in visiting every portion of the country, a task undertaken by command of King Frederic V at the instance of the Danish Academy of Sciences. The appended "Flora Islandica" was prepared from their collections by the Danish botanist, Johan Zoega. The map (dated 1771) was elaborated by the care of the famous Icelandic scholar, Jón Eiríksson (1728-1787), an ornament alike to his native country and to Denmark, in which much of his laborious life was passed, with the aid of the Danish historian, Gerhard Schöning. The latter wrote the brief preface to the first volume. The German translation by Joachim Michael Geuss ("Reise durch Island") appeared at Copenhagen in 1774-75. The French version ("Voyage en Islande"), consisting of five octavo volumes of text and a quarto atlas, was translated in part (volumes I-III) by Gaulthier de La Peyronie, and in part (volumes IV-V) by E. Bjørnerode, and was published at Paris in 1802. The English, greatly abridged, version ("Travels in Iceland") was printed in a slender octavo at London in 1805. The translator signs his notes: F. W. B. A second German edition forms the nineteenth volume of a "Sammlung der besten und neuesten Reisebeschreibungen," and was issued at Berlin 1779. These travels contain almost the only description of chess, as it was developed in the isolated region of Iceland, which has been accessible in a printed shape until within the last few years. The too brief section relating to the game is to be found in the first volume of the Danish edition (pp. 462-64). The original Danish text is as follows, the orthography of the Icelandic terms having been modernized:—"Skakspill have Islænderne lagt dem meget efter fra gammel tiid af, og endnu findes iblandt dem store spillere; især have Vesterlandets indvaanere ord derfor, og det saavel bønder, som de fornemme. De tage derved i agt de samme hovedregler, som bruges i andre lande, nogle faa ting undtagne, og beholde end i dag alle de gamle danske og norske navne og talemaader, som dette spill vedkomme. Matadorer eller officiererne kaldes *Menn* og *Skákmenn*; *Konungur*, kongen; *Frú* og *Drottning*, damen; *Biskup*, bispen, eller løberen; *Riddari*, springeren; *Hrókur* (en kiœmpe eller fribytter), ligesom i det franske sprog, taarnet eller elephanten. Knegterne kaldes *Peð*; *Skáka* og *Máta*, at sætte skak og mat. *Stanz* og *Jafntefli*, eller jævntavl, kaldes det, naar det er lige leeg paa begge sider, da den ene spiller ikke kan komme nogen vei, undtagen med kongen, som man aldrig er skyldig at trække, uden han bliver sat skak med det samme; og hvis han da ei faaer mat i det samme, er spillet ude, og det regnes for ingen vinding for nogen af parterne, men heller for en ukyndighed af dem, der har giort standsen. *Bert*, det er bart eller blot, kaldes

Skák, Skáktafl.

The name of the game in Icelandic is etymologically similar to that current among the central occidental nations, originating in the speech of Persia. It was also often styled, by Icelandic writers, *tafl* (pronounced *tabl*), although that word was, and is, properly a generic term applied to all games played on a board or table—usually with round pieces or men—the term itself being a corruption of the Latin *tabula*. It corresponds to the early English and French *tables*, as in Chaucer's lines ("Death of Blanche," l. 51):

> For me thoghte it better play
> Than playe at chesse or *tables*.

In its generic use it might mean either chess, draughts, backgammon, fox-and-geese (in Icelandic *refskák*, that is, fox-chess), nine-men's-morris (Icelandic *mylna*, frequently called in America *twelve-men-morris*), or any game for which a plain surface and men, or pieces, or figures were necessary. With the word *tables* may be compared the German *brettspiel* (from *brett*=board and *spiel*=game) signifying literally any game played on a board, with men. *Skáktafl* would be, therefore, a precise designation signifying *chess-tables*, or that kind of tables which we call chess. There were other words of the same sort, such as *hnefatafl*, *hnettafl*, *hnottafl* (these three, being possibly variants of

den mindste vinding, da den eenes mandskab er ganske borttaget, og dog kongen ikke sat mat: hvis han sættes skak i det samme er det *fuldt Bert*; hvis ikke kaldes det *litla Bert*. *Heimamát*, hiemmemat, *Peðrifur*, knegte-mat, og *Blóðsótt*, kongsknegtemat, holdes for de 3 største enkelte vindinger, og haanligste for den der taber. Det første skeer, naar kongen sættes skakmat i begyndelsen af spillet, saaledes, at den hverken er bleven sat skak i forveien, og ei heller har rørt sig af stedet. Det andet skakmat faaer kongen af een af knægterne: det tredie, naar han faaer mat af den knægt, som tilhører den anden konge, og endnu staaer paa sin række. *Útkomumát* er næst disse det største, og regnes dog ikke for haanligt. Det bestaaer deri, at kongen sættes mat med det samme en knægt kommer ud, eller i det træk, som gior en knægt til matador. Den mindste fuldkomne vinding er *Frúarmát*, naar der sættes mat med damen. Den største dobbelte vinding er 9 fold, og sielden derover; dog skal det være en stor spiller, og hans modstander kun lidet erfaren, naar matene kunne drives saa vidt. I andre lande er man fornøiet med enkelt skakmat; men her sættes kongen saa mange skakmat, som man haver mandskab til; dog skal spillet være bragt i saadan en orden i forveien, at i det kongen sættes det første mat, da følge de andre strax derpaa, uden at der maae skee andre træk imellem, eller at kongen kan slippe fra nogen af disse mater imidlertid; men i denne omgang kan den mindste forseelse tabe heele spillet. Gode spillere kunde sætte 6 til 7 slige skakmat ad gangen, endskiønt det andet partie veed alle reglerne, og er øvet deri. I skakspill tages her gierne secundanter, og iblandt gaaer det ikke af uden fortræd eller hidsighed, hvilket kommer meest af de dobbelte vindinger; thi det kan giøre en, især den, der i forveien er tungsindet, ærgerlig derover, at han skal i lang tiid jages med kongen frem og tilbage, tilligemed een af bisperne eller løberne, hvilken som den mindst hinderlige officier, overmanden gierne lader den anden beholde, kun for at faae desto større og anseeligere seier over ham. Dette har maaskee andre nationer seet paa, i det de bruge meest ikkun enkelte vindinger, hvorved leegen bliver mindre kiedsommelig. Alligevel viiser det en stor kunst, at kunne jævnlig giøre mange dobbelte vindinger; thi det kommer baade an paa en dyb eftertanke, og at holde tankerne bestandig samlede. Skak spilles vel i Island paa fleere maader, som bliver for vidtløftigt at fortælle; men denne er den rette, ældste og almindeligste. De andre, som er lettere, meer foranderlige og mindre kunstige, synes at være de nyere tiiders paafund." In his "Geschichte des Schachspiels" (II. pp. 177-178), Dr. A. van der Linde reproduces this passage from the German translation of the Icelandic travellers' narrative (p. 245), interspersing it with brief comments, some pointed and proper enough, others less so. He has copied the Danish text in his series of articles on "Skak paa Island," which will be found in an appendix to this volume.

the same word),[4] interpreted by some as draughts, by others as fox-and-geese, (but perhaps more likely to have resembled the former), *boddatafl*, *Freystafl*, and *kotrutafl* (backgammon, also simply styled *kotra*). The indefiniteness of the word *tafl* has given rise to much confusion. Not a few of the passages in the old writings, to which references are often made as allusions to chess, really relate to draughts, or some other game resembling it, rather than to chess. The pieces, or higher figures, have the common name *menn* (men), and hence chess is occasionally spoken of as *manntafl* or *mannskák*, to distinguish it from draughts and other sorts of *tables*.

Konungur; Drottning, Frú.

So the Icelanders designate the two chief pieces of the chess-field. *Konungur* (abbreviated *kongur*) is cognate with our word King; of the last two words, *drottning* is the genuine Icelandic equivalent of our Queen, while *frú* means *lady*, and its former use in Icelandic chess is probably owing to Danish influence. The usual name of this most powerful piece is now *drottning*.

Hrókur; Biskup; Riddari; Peð.

The first word is, of course, the very early Eastern appellation of the Rook, a term hopelessly disguised by the popular etymologies given to it in the various countries through which it has passed—one of its phases being a confusion with the fabulous bird (roc) of the "Arabian Nights," a process of etymological obscuration repeated both in England (*rook*, the chess-piece and *rook*, the bird) and in Iceland, the form *hrókur* being ascribable to the influence of the older word *hrókur*, a rare Icelandic name of a bird. The name of this piece is sufficient evidence, if there were no other, of the English origin of Icelandic chess, since, in the other Scandinavian dialects, the rook (in accordance with the German nomenclature) is known as the "tower" (Swedish *torn*; Danish *taarn*).—*Biskup* is our Bishop, English and Icelandic being the only languages in which the piece bears this ecclesiastical title (German *läufer*; Swedish, *löpare*; Danish, *löber*—literally "runner," but in the sense of "herald" or "courier"), although its Polish name is *pop* (*i. e.* priest). In English its earliest title was *alfin* (Arabic *al*=the, and *fil*=elephant),[5] and so it was called by Caxton (1474):—"The manere and nature of the draught of the Alphyn is suche that he that is black in his propre siege is sette on the right side of the Kyng, and he that is whyt on the left side." The appellation was occasionally used in England as late as the sixteenth century, for Rowbothum, the translator of Vida's "Scacchia" (1562), says:—"The Bishoppes some name *Alphins*."—*Riddari* is the ordinary translation of our word knight; and it is worthy of note that while the Swedes call this piece, according to the older dictionaries, the "horse" (*häst*), or like the Danes adopt the German word springer (Swedish, *springare*; Danish, *springer*—from the *springing* or jumping character of its move) their fellow Scandinavians of the Northern island

[4] This is denied by the Icelandic archæologist, Sigurður Guðmundsson, who, in his first report as director of the Archæological Museum at Reykjavík (Kaupmannahöfn 1868, p. 39), states that "in our ancient writings two kinds of tables" are mentioned, *hnottafl* or *hnettafl*, and *hnefatafl* or *hneftafl*—an assertion to which we shall return on another page.

[5] The existing Italian (*alfiere*) and Spanish (*alfil* or *arfil*) names of the Bishop have the same etymology.

retain the mediæval term (derived either from the Romance *caballus* = horse, or from the Germanic verb, *ride*, *reiten*, or else borrowing the form of the Germanic *knecht*, *knight*) signifying a military leader or (horse)soldier of rank, and corresponding to the one employed by the Italians (*cavaliere*), Spaniards and Portuguese (*cavallo*), French (*chevalier*), and English (*knight*). It is to be remarked that, although the Germans and the continental Scandinavians possess a word cognate with the Icelandic *riddari* (German *reiter*; Danish, *ridder*), those words are never employed in chess. — *Peð* comes from the Middle-Latin *pedes* (with the inflectional stem *pedon-*) meaning foot-soldier, thus having the same etymology as the English Pawn, the French *pion*, the Italian *pedina* and the Spanish *peon*. — The names of the chessmen used in England and Iceland not only reveal the track pursued by the game in reaching those countries, but betray the fact that chess in the Middle Ages was especially a diversion of the court and the cloister. But much more light might be thrown upon the story of chess in Iceland by a careful study of the nomenclature employed, at present and in the past, by the chessplayers of the island — if undertaken by an investigator familiar alike with the story of chess and with Icelandic philology and letters.

Skák (skáka); Mát (máta).

Here the first word is the English chess and check (*skáka* being the verb, to check). The varying forms of these words, in all the European tongues, are derived from the Persian *shâh* (or *schách*), signifying "King"—the game thus owing its name to its most important—all important—piece. The English "check!" (interjection) is in Icelandic *skák!* As in English, the exclamatory phrases, *skák þjer!* (check to you!) and *skák konginum!* (check to the King!) may likewise be used when attacking the opponent's chief piece.—*Mát* is the English "mate" (*máta* being the verb, to mate). The origin of both —being virtually the word used by every nation—is the Arabic *mât* = dead (or, according to recent investigators, the Persian *mât* = surprized, confounded);[6] "checkmate," therefore, means simply: "the King dead," or "the King is dead" (or "the King is confounded"). The Icelandic renders "checkmate" by the phrase *skák og mát* (*i. e.* "check and mate"), the verbal expression being *skáka og máta*.

[6] Dr. A. van der Linde, in his "Quellenstudien zur Geschichte des Schachspiels" (1881, pp. 14-15), cites the latest authorities, the Orientalists Gildemeister and Dozy. The former, in an article in the "Zeitschrift der deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft" (XXVIII, p. 696) says: — "In *shâhmât* die zusammensetzung eines persischen substantivs mit einem arabischen perfect in ungewönlicher wortstellung und bedeutung .... anzunemen, sollte man den einheimischen lexikografen überlassen. *Mât* ist vielmehr mit Mirza Kasem Beg als adjectiv in der bedeutung *verblüfft, nicht aus noch ein wissend* zu fassen, da die bei den Persern gebrauchten synonyma wie *entkräftet, besiegt, zu handeln unfähig* adjectiva sind, und der sprachgebrauch dafür spricht." The latter, in his "Supplement aux dictionnaires arabes" (1878. I.) coincides with Gildemeister: — "Convaincu par les objections de M. Gildemeister je ne vois plus dans le mot *mât* le verbe arabe qui signifie 'il est mort'; je pense au contraire avec lui et Mirza Kasem Beg (dans le 'Journal Asiatique' 1851, II, p. 585), qu'il cite et qui merite d'être consulté, que c'est l'adjectif que les Persans emploient dans le sens d'*étonné, surpris*." This answers all the philological objections to the use, in one hybrid phrase, of the Persian substantive *shâh* and the Arabic verbal form *mât*. At the same time it makes the action performed by the checkmate more logical. The ever-existing, all-essential chess-king is no longer considered as dead, but as merely "surprised" or "confounded" by the restraints or restrictions, which his adversaries have placed upon his movements.

Jafntefli, Stanz; Þrátefli; Patt.

These are the terms for various sorts of drawn games. *Jafntefli* (even table, even play, or even-manned) and *Stanz* (standstill, stopping) are positions which are drawn by reason of lack of mating force on either side.—*Þrátefli* (the former element derived from the adjective *þrár*, stubborn, obstinate, persevering, the latter a derivative of *tafl*) is the Icelandic expression for a game drawn by perpetual check. — *Patt*, the equivalent of our English "stalemate," came into Icelandic from Danish. It is a word common to most of the European languages (German *patt*, French *pat*, Italian *patta*), but its etymology seems never to have been satisfactorily determined. Both an oriental and a western (Latin) origin have been suggested. The word has always been wholly unknown in England.

Bert; Heimamát.

These are two of the simple mates or winnings. The first-named is reckoned, according to Eggert Ólafsson, the least honorable method, for the winning player, of ending a game. The term signifies *bare* of men, and answers to the French *roi dépouillé*. It is stated, somewhat obscurely, that, if at the time of taking his adversary's last piece, the winning player does not mate the other, it is called *litla* (little) *bert*; if he mates simultaneously with the capture of his adversary's last piece or pawn, it is styled *stóra* (great) *bert*. — The second term cited is literally "home mate," and is a mate given at the first check, and before the King has moved from his square. We might perhaps paraphrase it by our "Scholar's mate" or "Fool's mate."

Peðrífur; Blóðsótt; Útkomumát.

The former of these words describes an ending in which mate is given by one of the pawns; instead of it may be used *peðmát* or *peðsmát*, pawn-mate. Each piece, in fact, except the King, gives its name to the mate effected by it, such as *drottningarmát* (or *frúarmát*), "queen's mate," *hróksmát*, "rook's mate," and so on. *Blóðsótt* (that is, "dysentery") is a coarsely humorous appellation given to a mate effected by the King's Pawn while still remaining on the King's file. Such a conclusion to the game is regarded as particularly disgraceful to the loser. *Útkomumát* is one of the so-called complete mates, or double winnings. It signifies a mate given by a Pawn at the eighth rank at the very moment of becoming a piece. Others of the double winnings are mates given by two or more pieces, and increasing, of course, in difficulty as the number of mating pieces is increased. For it was a singular rule, before the modification of the Old Icelandic chess to make it conform to the modern rules in other lands, that the player might so conduct his game as to be able, after giving a mate with one piece, to make another move, which should bring a second piece to bear upon the King so as to give, as it were, a second mortal blow, and by still another move to repeat the operation again with a third piece. These mates were to be given on successive moves; and it required the greatest caution to prevent the losing party, by interposition or capture, from avoiding any of them.

Later on in this publication it will be seen that many more varieties of mate were practiced by Icelandic chessplayers, so that, if a chess magazine, or chess column, had been formerly published in the far-off Thule, the edi-

tors thereof would have been obliged not only to note, at the beginning of each game, the title of the opening played, but also to designate the particular style of ending brought about by the winning party. There are also enumerated, in accounts of the Icelandic game, many other technical terms, which, in this sketch, we have been obliged to leave unnoticed. It cannot be doubted, as has been already hinted, that an art having so extended a nomenclature must have been practiced by a great number of individuals through many generations.

When Chess came to Iceland.

In regard to the date of the introduction of the game into Iceland it is undeniable that the country's most distinguished son, Snorri Sturluson, was more or less acquainted with the game, when he narrated, in St. Olaf's saga, the story of King Canute the Great and his retainer, Jarl Úlf the rich. This saga was composed not far from the year 1230, but the incident related occurred two hundred years previous, so that, if we could accept Snorri's account as absolutely correct, we might infer that the oriental sport had become an accustomed diversion at the courts of the Scandinavian North as early as the first part of the eleventh century. But it is more than probable that the game played between Canute and Úlf was another sort of "brettspiel" (tafl, or "tables"), while Snorri, knowing only chess, or deeming it, as it was in his own time, the proper court-game, uses the words *skáktafl* (game of chess) and *riddari* (knight)—the latter being the sole piece named. A suggestion has been made that a knowledge of chess might have been brought from England to Iceland, in the later portion of the twelfth century, by any one of three well-known men, or by all of them. They are not the only natives of the island who sojourned in Great Britain during that period, but they are the most noted, and the most likely, from their surroundings, both in England and Iceland, to have learned and imported such an intellectual amusement.[7] The first of the three notabilities in question was Þorlákur Þórhallsson, bishop of Skálholt, Iceland's southern see (*b.* 1133 *d.* 1193). After his death he enjoyed the singular honor of canonization, not by the pope, but by authority of the Icelandic Althing, or parliament (1199) — an act popularly ratified in the Scandinavian countries and Britain (and even by the Icelandic colony then existing in Greenland), in which lands he was always styled St. Thorlak, and had many shrines erected in his honor. His appointed festival (Thorlaksmas) fell on December 23. Somewhat before 1160 he went, for purposes of study, to Paris, and thence to Lincoln in England, passing six years in those two places. In his saga, one of the most interesting of the histories of the Icelandic Bishops, we are told in reference to his stay in the English city that he "learned there great learning,"[8] and returned home with a varied and extended knowledge. He was followed into foreign regions by the Icelandic notable, Hrafn Sveinbjarnarson, a man of many accomplishments—scholar, poet, artist, physician, jurist. His most important visit to the continent apparently took place before or about 1190. He went first of all to the Orkneys, whence he returned to Iceland, but subse-

[7] In elaborating this conjecture I have been greatly aided by my friend, Mr. Bogi Th. Melsteð, Danish assistant-archivist, and one of the most profound living students of Icelandic history.

[8] "Ok nam þar enn mikit nám." — *Biskupa Sögur*, (Kaupmannahöfn 1858), I., p. 92.

quently crossed over to Norway, and passed on to England, where he paid his devotions at the sanctuary of St. Thomas-a-Becket in Canterbury, to which he offered as gifts specimens of his artistic skill, one being an elaborately carved walrus-tusk. Thence he sought the famous shrines of St. Giles in Ilanz (Glion), Switzerland, and St. James at Compostella, Spain, and thereafter he proceeded to Rome, as the last and crowning goal of his pilgrim-tour; then he went back to Iceland by way of Norway. Hrafn made at least one more voyage to the British Isles, and finally fell in a feud at home in 1213. It will be noted that the ingenious Hrafn thus had an opportunity of familiarizing himself with chess, not only in England but also in Spain and Italy, its oldest seats in Europe, in which lands it had then been known for two hundred years. His saga is printed as an appendix to the Oxford edition of the Sturlunga saga, and also in the Biskupa sögur.[9] More remarkable still was the third conspicuous Icelander, who became acquainted, at that early day, with English life and manners. This was Páll Jónsson (*b.* 1155), bishop of Skálholt, the direct successor of Thorlak the Holy. In the years about 1180 he was at school in England. His elevation to the episcopate took place in 1194, and he went abroad again the same year to be consecrated by the primate of Norway at Throndhjem, but as Archbishop Eirikur, in consequence of a quarrel with King Sverrir of Norway, was an exile in Denmark, Páll proceeded to Lund (then a Danish city), where, by the authorization of Archbishop Eirikur, he was consecrated by the great prelate Absalon, who held the see of Lund. Both Archbishop Eirikur and Pètur, bishop of Roskilde, Denmark's ancient capital, were present at the imposing ceremony. Bishop Páll went back to his diocese, and did noble work until he died in 1211. His saga says that when he departed from Iceland in his youth for foreign study, he stayed for a while at the court of Harald, Jarl of the Orkneys, and then went on to his English school, "and learned there such a vast deal of learning that scarcely had there been a case in which a man had learned equal learning, nor of the same quality, in an equal space of time; and when he came out to Iceland, he was above all other men in the grace of his scholarship, in the writing of Latin, and in book-lore. He was also a man of fine voice, and a singer surpassing all his contemporaries in both melody and sonorousness."[10] Bishop Páll's great-grand-father was Iceland's early scholar, Sæmund the Learned, whose name has been given to Iceland's ancient mythological epos (Sæmundar Edda); while his father was Jón Loptsson (*b.* 1124, *d.* 1197), the master of the historian, Snorri Sturluson (*b.* 1178, *d.* 1241), the very writer who first mentions chess. The bishop must have known Snorri well in the latter's study-years in Jón Loptsson's house, during the decade before 1197, and must have told the youth much of what he had seen and learned during his own student life in England. And after 1197, when his able teacher, Jón Loptsson, was dead, Snorri lived, for at least two years, in the house of Bishop Páll's brother, Sæmundur Jónsson, which he left only on his marriage. It is noteworthy that in the Árons saga one of Snorri's nephews, Þórður Sighvatsson, is rep-

[9] "Sturlunga Saga," edited by Dr. Guðbrandur Vigfússon, (Oxford 1878), II., pp. 295-311, and "Biskupa Sögur," I. pp. 639-676.

[10] "Ok nam þar svá mikit nám at trautt var dæmi til, at nokkurr maðr hefði jafnmikið nám numit nè þvílikt á jafnlangri stund; ok þá er hann kom út til Íslands, þá var hann fyrir öllum mönnum öðrum at kurteisi lærdóms sins, versagjörð og bókalist. Hann var ok svá mikill raddmaðr og söngmaðr, og af þar söngr hans og rödd af öðrum mönnum, þeim er voru honum samtíða." — *Biskupa Sögur*, I. p. 127.

resented as playing chess whith another Icelander, Hrani Koðránsson, in Norway.[11] The incident described took place in the autumn of 1238 while Snorri was still living. This is another piece of testimony tending to prove the great sagaman's acquaintance with chess.

All these three observant and acquisitive students were in England, among men and youth who felt a keen interest in the revival of learning and the arts, at a time when chess had come to be extensively known—especially in the convents and schools; for it was about 1180 that the abbot of Cirencester, Alexander Neckam, produced his treatise, "De naturis rerum," which had a special chapter—and a very remarkable one—devoted to an exposition of chess. This was the earliest chess-writing in England, and of course, before it could have been composed the game must have become widely spread and esteemed.

2. — Chess in the Sagas.[12]

In treating of some of the places in the Icelandic sagas where chess is mentioned, we shall pay heed only to those passages in which the word *skák*, or *skáktafl*, or *skákborð*, or the names of the pieces given, indicate that, in the mind of the writer at least, the incident recounted relates to chess, and not to some other game at "tables." The first citation is from St. Olaf's saga, an historical record usually ascribed to Snorri Sturluson, but which, in any case, he edited, since it is a part of his great work, the "Heimskringla"—the sagas of the kings of Norway, of whom Olaf the Holy (Ólafur helgi) was one. But really the field occupied by Snorri's work embraces not only Norway, but Sweden and Denmark likewise, the author portraying, more or less fully, the stories of the kings of those lands during the period he treats.

Ólafs Saga helga.

Canute the Great (Knútur ríki), the ruler both of England and Denmark, "Sovereign of five Realms" as he is styled in the old British chronicles, once went to Southern Sweden—then Danish—to suppress a rebellion, which had been incited by his son Hardicanute (Hörðaknútur) and by Úlf Jarl (Úlfur jarl, or Earl Wolf), a powerful chieftain and courtier. Rumors of the advance of the royal fleet having reached them, these latter deserted their followers and allies, among whom were the kings of Sweden and Norway, and hastened to make their peace with the monarch. The fleet sailed into the mouth of Helga river (Icelandic, *áin helga*=the holy river), where a fierce battle ensued. The Anglo-Danish King's own ship was at one time in imminent danger, but Úlf Jarl, at great personal hazard, succeeded in saving it. Canute now went to Roskilde, the capital of his Danish domains, where he arrived the day before the feast of St. Michael in the year 1027. Here Úlf Jarl, eager to wipe out his former offence, welcomed him with a splendid banquet, and endeavored, by merry words and submissive speeches, to reinstate himself in Canute's graces. But all his efforts to please the incensed monarch were futile; the latter continued to look grave and ill-natured. In the course of the evening the Jarl challenged his sovereign to a game of chess, and the chal-

[11] "Þeir Þórðr ok Hrani sátu at skáktafli."— *Sturlunga Saga* (1878), II., p. 344.

[12] See the *Chess Monthly*, (New York 1858), II., pp. 194-195.

lenge was accepted. During the game, Canute made a hasty move and left a knight *en prise*; the Jarl captured it, but the King requested him to replace it, and either make another move, or else allow him (Canute) to recall his former move. The Jarl refused, arose from the table in anger, overturned the pieces, and walked away. The King, with a bitter laugh, called to him and said:—"Are you running away, you cowardly Wolf?" The Jarl turned and replied:—"You would have run much farther away at the Helga river, if you had been able. You did n't call me a coward then, when I came to your help, while the Swedes were slaying your men like dogs." The next morning the pious sovereign, who rebuked his irreverent courtiers by the sea-side with such religious philosophy, and who had just returned from an humble pilgrimage to Rome, sent one of his Norwegian men-at-arms to the church in Roskilde, in which the poor Jarl had taken sanctuary, and had him slain in the choir. This adds another to the singular parallels of history, for Úlf Jarl appears to have been to Canute the Great what Thomas-a-Becket was to Henry the Second.[13]

Knýtlinga Saga.

In 1157, something more than a hundred years after the death of Canute, another historic game of chess, and another royal violation of hospitality, took place in the ancient city of Roskilde. In that year the kingdom of Denmark was divided between three monarchs, Svend (Sweyn), Valdemar and Canute the

[13] For an English rendering of this episode see Snorri Sturluson's *Stories of the Kings of Norway*, translated by William Morris and Eirikur Magnússon (London 1891), II., pp. 326-327. We transcribe here the whole episode in the original text:—"Knútr konungr reið upp til Hróiskeldu dag inn næsta fyrir Mikjáls-messu ok með honum sveit mikil manna. En þar hafði gört veizlu í móti honum Úlfr jarl, mágr hans; veitti jarl allkappsamliga ok var allkátr. Konungr var fámálugr ok heldr ófrýnn; jarl orti orða á hann ok leitaði þeira málsenda, er hann vætti, at konungi myndi bezt þykkja. Konungr svarar fá. Þá spurði jarl, ef hann vildi leika at skáktafli; hann játti því; tóku þeir þá skáktaflit ok léku. Úlfr jarl var maðr skjótorðr ok óvæginn bæði í orðum ok í öllum öðrum hlutum ok hinn mesti framkvæmðar-maðr um riki sitt ok hermaðr mikill, ok er saga mikil frá honum sögð; Úlfr jarl var maðr ríkastr í Danmörk, þegar er konuginn liddi. Systir Úlfs jarls var Gyða, er átti Guðini jarl Úlfnaðrsson ok váru synir þeira Haraldr Engla-konungr, Tósti jarl, Valþjófr jarl, Mörukári jarl, Sveinn jarl, Gyða dóttir þeira, er átti Eatvarðr inn góði Engla-konungr.

En er þeir léku at skáktafli, Knútr konungr ok Úlfr jarl, þá lék konungr fingrbrjót mikinn; þá skækði jarl af honum riddara; konungr bar aptr taflit hans ok segir, at hann skyldi annat leika; jarl reiddisk ok skaut niðr taflborðinu stóð upp ok gekk í brot. Konungr mælti: "renn þú nú, Úlfr inn ragi." Jarl snøri aptr við dyrrin ok mælti: "lengra myndir þú renna í Ánni helgu, ef þú kvæmir því við; kallaðir þú eigi þá Úlf inn raga, er ek lagða til at hjálpa þér, er Sviar börðu yðr sem hunda"; gekk jarl þá út ok för til svefns. Litlu síðarr gekk konungr at sofa. Eptir um morgoninn, þá er konungr klæddisk, þá mælti hann við skósvein sinn: "gakk þú, segir hann, til Úlfs jarls og drep hann." Sveininn gekk ok var á brot um hríð ok kom aptr. Þá mælti konungr: "draptu jarl?" Hann svarar: "eigi drap ek hann, þviat hann var genginn til Lúciskirkju." Maðr hét Ívarr hviti, norrænn at kyni; hann var þá hirðmaðr Knúts konungs og herbergis-maðr hans. Konungr mælti til Ívars: "gakk þú ok drep jarl." Ívarr gekk til kirkju ok inn í kóriun ok lagði þar sverði í gögnum jarl; fekk þar Úlfr jarl bana. Ívarr gekk til konungs ok hafði sverðit blóðugt í hendi. Konungr spurði: "draptu nú jarl?." Ívarr svarar: "nú drap ek hann." "Vel gerðir þú þá" kvað hann. En eptir, þá er jarl var drepinn, létu munkar læsa kirkju. Þá var þat sagt konungi. Hann sendi mann til munka, það þá láta upp kirkju og syngja tíðir; þeir gerðu, sem konungr bauð. En er konungr kom til kirkju, þá skeytti hann jarðir miklar til kirkju, svá at þat er herað mikit, ok hófsk sá staðr mikit síðan; af því hafa þær jarðir þar til legit síðan. Knútr konungr reið síðan út til skipa sinna ok var þar lengi um haustit með allmikinu her."—"*Heimskringla*," (Noregs Konunga Sögur) by Snorri Sturluson, edited by Finnur Jónsson, II (containing the *Ólafs Saga helga*), pp. 370-372 (København 1896).

Fifth. This took place, after years of contest between Svend on the one hand and Valdemar and Canute on the other. Each King was to rule over a third of the realm, and each swore before the altar to preserve the compact inviolate. But it did not last three days. Canute asked his brother monarchs to spend a few days of festivity with him at Roskilde. Svend came with a crowd of soldiers. One evening Valdemar sat at the chess board, where the battle waxed warm. His adversary was a nobleman, and Canute sat by Valdemar's side watching the game. All at once, Canute, observing some suspicious consultations between Svend and one of his captains, and feeling a presentiment of evil, threw his arms around Valdemar's neck and kissed him: —"Why so merry, cousin?" asked the latter, without removing his eyes from the chess-board. "You will soon see," replied Canute. Just then the armed soldiery of Svend rushed into the apartment and instantly drew their swords. But when King Valdemar saw this, he sprang up from his seat at the chess board and wrapped his mantle about his arm to serve as a shield, because he, his opponent at chess and King Canute were all without arms, for no one expected violence. Valdemar was the first of them all to march towards his assailants, and plunged with such force against Þèttleif, one of the assassins, that they both fell through the door; then another, Tóli Hemingsson, struck at King Valdemar, wounding his thigh, but not deeply, for his weapon scarcely reached the bone; he also received a cut on the thumb. But when Valdemar's men, who were without, suddenly became aware that he had fallen, they covered him with their bodies, and were all hewn in pieces. But he was thus enabled to make his escape, and lives in history as the powerful Valdemar the Great. Canute, however, was slain, and was sometimes called by his countrymen St. Canute.[14]— Perhaps it will not be greatly out of place to note that in the following century chess again makes it appearance upon the historic stage of Denmark, though at too late a date to be recorded by any Icelandic sagaman. At that period, Eric Plovpenning or *Ploughpenny* (so called because of a penny tax

[14] "Annan dag eptir drukku þeir allir, konungarnir í einu herbergi, ok voru kátir. Menn Sveins konungs höfðu torg ok skemtan, ok leika úti hjá herbergjunum, ok drifu menn þangat til or herbergjunum, er áleið dagiun, ok þótti mönnum þat kátara, enn at sitja einart við drykkinu; var þá fátt manna í herberginu, nema þeir konungarnir; þá komu þar inn menn Sveins konúngs, Þéttleifr Eðlarsson ok nokkurir menn aðrir, ok báknuðu til Sveins konungs. Hann stóð upp í móti þeim, ok töluðust þeir við litla hríð ok þó leynilega; síðan gekk Sveinn konungr út með þeim, hann gekk í hús eitt, ok byrgði sik þar, en Þéttleifr ok Tóli Hemingsson ok Ýngvar kveisa ok aðrir virktamenn Sveins konúngs snéru þá aptr til herbergis síns, þar er þeir Valdimarr konungr sátu fyrir ok Knútr konungr. Valdimarr konungr lék at skáktafli við annann mann, en Knútr konungr sat í pallinum hjá honum; ok er þeir Þéttleifr gengu í dyrnar, laut Knútr konungr til Valdimars konungs, ok kysti hann. Valdimar konungr sá eigi af taflinu, ok spurði: hví ertu nú svá bliðr, mágr. Knútr konungr svaraði: vita muntu þat brátt. Sveins menn þustu þá inn hverr at öðrum ok allir alvápnaðir, þeir brugðu þegar sverðunum. En er Valdimarr konungr sá þat, hljóp hann upp, ok vafði skikkjunni um hönd sér, er hann hafði yfir sér, þviat þeir voru váplausir inni, þviat engi vissi ófriðarván. Valdimarr konungr hljóp upp ok fram á gólfit fyrst allra manna sinna; hann stiklaði svá hart upp á Þéttleif, at þeir féllu báðir utar fyrir dyrnar; þá hjó Tóli Hemingsson til Valdimars konungs, ok kom þat högg á lærit, ok var þat svöðusár og ekki hættligt; hann varð ok sár á þumalfingri. Ok er menn Valdimars konungs sá, at hann var fallinn, þá lögðust þeir á hann ofan, ok voru þar saxaðir, en Valdimarr konungr komst við þetta undan. Þá komst Þéttleifr á fætr, ok hjó þegar öfgri hendi til Knúts konungs, ok varð þat högg svá mikit, at hann klauf allt höfuðit til háls, ok var þat hans banasár. Annarr maðr veitti ok Knúti konungi áverka, sá er Iljálmsviðarr hét. Knútr konungr féll í einn skorstein; segja Danir hann helgan."—*Fornmanna Sögur*, published by the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, XI (containing the *Knytlinga Saga*), pp. 366-367 (Kaupmannahöfn 1828).

laid in his brief reign on each plough in the kingdom), had begun to rule wisely and well over the fierce and war-loving people of his realm—then a much bigger country than now. In the summer of 1250 he was on his way to defend the town of Rendsburg on the Eider, against the attack of some predatory German bands, when he received an invitation from his brother Abel to visit him in Slesvig. The unsuspicious and open-hearted Eric accepted. After dinner, on the ninth of August, the very day of his arrival under the fatal roof, he retired to a little pavilion near the water, to enjoy a quiet game of chess with a knight whose name was Henrick Kerkwerder. As they were thus engaged, the black-hearted Abel entered the room, marched up to the chess-table, accompanied by several of his retainers, and began to overwhelm the King with abuse. Finally the unfortunate Eric was seized, thrown into chains, and basely murdered the same night. Poor King! Little did he merit so cruel a checkmate, for the commencement of his career was full of promise for himself and his dominions.

Þorgils Saga skarða.

Our next chess event took place in 1241-42 and is narrated in the saga of Þorgils skarði (which is to say, Þorgils of the hare-lip). It chances also that this incident, like one already treated, has a certain relation to Snorri Sturluson, for Gizur Þorvaldsson—known as Earl Gizur (Gizur Jarl) in Icelandic history—who appears in it, was the chief actor in the assassination of the great historian. Böðvar, the son of Þórður Sturluson, and therefore the nephew of Snorri, after the conclusion of the political feud which terminated in his uncle's death, was obliged not only to take an oath of feudal lealty to Gizur, the enemy of his house, but to hand over to the latter as hostages his own son (Þorgils Böðvarsson, the one who afterwards became noted as Þorgils skarði) and his own brother (Guthormur Þórðarson). Þorgils was at that time only fifteen years of age, but sturdy of arm and will as became the race he sprang from. He spent the first winter at Gizur's residence, called Tunga, and Gróa, Gizur's wife, treated him most kindly. It happened, one day, that Þorgils and Sámur Magnússon, a kinsman of Gizur, quarreled over a game of chess. Sámur wanted to take back a knight, which he had set *en prise* (*í uppnám*), but Þorgils would not permit him to do it. Then one of Gizur's retainers, called Markús Marðarson, advised that the knight should be allowed to go back to its old square, "and don't be brawling at chess!" he added. Þorgils said that he did n't intend to accept either counsel or command from Markús, and suddenly swept the men off the table, and let them fall into their pouch; then, standing up, he struck at the ear of Sámur (with the pouch of chessmen, as the construction would seem to imply), so that the ear bled. At the same time he exclaimed:—"It is much to know that we cannot venture to hold ourselves equal in anything to the kinsmen of Gizur." Then there was a running out of the room to inform Gizur of the deed, and of Þorgils' slighting remark; Gizur entered and asked whether Sámur did n't dare to avenge himself. Guthormur and Gróa were sitting on the same settle, when Gizur came into the room, and they heard that he scolded the boys angrily; whereupon they drew near, and a priest with them. Þorgils was answering Gizur in a way that was very provoking. Gróa took her husband's hand and said:—"Why do you act in such an angry way? I should

think that you are the person to be responsible, even if he should do something demanding legal compensation"—meaning that Gizur was obliged by law to pay fines for acts committed by hostages while in his household or charge. Gizur answered:—"As to that I will not accept your judgment." She replied:—"Then I will pay the fine, if we be adjudged." With that they led Þorgils aside, and begged him to reply submissively to Gizur, but Þorgils cried out that he would not do that. Various persons then offered their advice, calling the whole thing a childish affair. So the matter was allowed to rest, but after that Gizur was always colder towards Þorgils.[15]—This story is interesting in more than one way. It shows that even youth—of the better classes—were, at that day, acquainted with chess; that the custom was to keep the chess-sets in pouches, or purposely-made bags; and that chess nomenclature thus early included a phrase equivalent to our *en prise*. The young chessplayer, Þorgils, became in time a champion of high importance, warmly trusted by his friends and feared by his enemies, and of all Icelanders of his time stood highest in the regard of the Norwegian King, Hákon the Old. He was slain in a political fight January 22, 1258, only thirty-two years of age, and his saga—which is a part of the great Sturlunga saga—was written not many years afterwards.

Guðmundar Saga góða.

We have alluded, on another page of this volume, to a bishop of Skálholt in Iceland who was popularly canonized and styled St. Thorlak. A like instance also occurs in the history of Iceland's northern see—that of Hólar. Guðmundur the Holy, a most pious prelate, who presided over the Hólar diocese, died in the year 1237, and many were the miracles performed by him both before and after death. His successor was Bótólfur, a Norwegian, whose unauthorized consecration by the primate of Throndhjem was not very gratefully received by the Icelandic clergy and people who were thus placed under his jurisdiction. His life is contained in a short appendix (for he held his office only eight years) to the saga of Bishop Guðmund, and it includes the following anecdote:—"It happened once in Hólar, at Christmas, that two deacons, or minor priests, were playing chess, one of whom was hasty of speech and quarrelsome. Bishop Bótólf came into the room, sat down on a settle in front of the players, and interfered in the play by giving advice to one of the combatants, in whose favor the game soon began to turn, so that he was near mating his adversary, a feat which was largely the result of the

[15] "Sá atburðr varð, at þá skilði á um tafl, Þorgils Böðvarsson ok Sám Magnússon frænda Gizurar, vildi Sámr bera aptr riddara, er hann hafði telft í uppnámi, en Þorgils lét því ekki ná. Þá lagði til Markús Marðarson, at aptr skildi bera riddarann, 'Ok látið ykkr ekki á skilja um tafl.' Þorgils sagðisk ekki fyrir hans orð mundu göra; ok svarfaði taflinu, ok lét í punginn; ok stóð upp; ok laust við eyra Sámi, svá at blæddi, ok mælti við: 'Mikit er þat at vita, at vér skulim öngan hlut þora at halda til jafns við frændr Gizurar.' Þá var fram hlaupit ok sagt Gizuri; ok kom hann inn, ok spurði hvárt Sámr þyrði eigi at hefna sín. Þau Guthormr ok Gróa höfðu setið á palli er Gizurr kom í stofu, ok heyrðu at hann andsakaði sveinana reiðulega; gengu þau til ok prestr með þeim. Þorgils svarar Gizuri heldr skapraunar-samliga. Gróa tók í hönd Gizuri ok mælti: 'Hví lætr þú svá reiðulega? mér þætti þú eiga fyrir at svara, þótt hann hefði það nokkuð gört er bót-þurfa væri.' Gizurr svarar: 'Eigi vil ek á þessu þinu dóm.' Hón svarar:' Ek skal þó bæta ef þarf.' Leiddu þau Þorgils á brott, ok báðu þau hann vel svara Gizuri; en Þorgils kvezk þat eigi mundu göra. Lögðu þá margir til, ok kölluðu þetta vera bernsku-bragð. Féll þat þá niðr; ok var Gizurr færri við Þorgils en áðr." — *Sturlunga Saga* (which includes the *Þorgils Saga skarða*), edited by Guðbrandur Vigfússon, (Oxford 1878), II., p.105.

bishop's counsel. Then, naturally, the priest, whose game had gone so badly, became angry, and said to the bishop, without any regard to the latter's episcopal dignity: — 'It is better for you, brother Bótólf, to go into the cathedral, and read over the talk you have got to make to-night, for what you said last night was all wrong; moreover your predecessor, the holy bishop Guðmund, gave his attention rather to the saying of prayers and the giving of alms than to the schemes of chess.' Thereupon Bishop Bótólf answered his deacon more wisely and calmly than he had been addressed: — 'Thanks, my good deacon, I shall take your wholesome advice, and betake myself to the cathedral. What you say, too, is true—many things and great things distinguished the character of Bishop Guðmund, when contrasted with mine.'" The chronicle goes on to say that Bótólf was always thereafter a quiet and modest man—in fact, not severe enough for those he had to rule. He died on a visit to Throndhjem—which was called in those days Niðarós—and was buried in the monastery of Helgisetur not far away from that episcopal city.[16]

Króka-Refs Saga.

There is a brief Icelandic saga, the text of which, in its latest and best edition, fills only a little over forty not very large pages, which is known as the saga of Króka-Refur. It is the history of an Icelander, who received from his parents at his birth the name of Refur (= fox), which, on account of the character its bearer developed subsequently, became Króka-Refur, that is "Refur the wily." The book is full of adventures, and the number of manuscripts of it extant evince the popularity it long enjoyed. It has hitherto been classed among the fabulous sagas, but the various later editors agree in recognizing not a little historical truth at the bottom of it, and consider that some of its events, which are recorded as having taken place in the tenth century, were really transmitted traditionally—somewhat distorted in their chronology—to the period when the saga was written down, about the middle of the fourteenth century. The scenes are laid partly in Iceland, Norway and Denmark, but in good part, too, in the fjords of Greenland, among the Icelandic colonists, so that the saga belongs, in a certain sense, to the literature which relates to the early Icelandic discovery of America. At any rate it shows that, three centuries and a half after the first voyages to the unexplored western hemisphere, the idea of commercial and friendly relations with the settlements in the new world, to which those voyages gave rise, was still, in

[16] "Svá bar til einn tíma á Hólastað, at jólum, at tveir djáknar tefldu skáktafl, var annarr djáknninn öroðr ok uppivöðslumikill; kom þá herra Bótólfr biskup inn í stofuna, ok settist niðar á einn knakk þar framan at sem klerkarnir telfdu, lagði hann til með öðrum klerkinum, tók þá að hallast taflit, svá at öðrum var komit at máti, mest af tillögum biskups; reiddist klerkrinn, sá er verr gekk taflit, svá segjandi til biskups: betra er þér, bróðir Bótólfr! at fara út til kirkju ok sjá yfir ræðing þinn, er þú átt at lesa í nótt, þviat þú last allt rangt í fyrri nótt; starfaði ok Guðmundr biskup, sem fyrir þik var, meirr í bænahaldi ok ölmusugjörðum en í tafibrögðum. Þá svarar herra Bótólfr biskup djáknanum aptr í gegn, betr ok hógværligar en til var talat: haf þökk fyrir, djákni minn! þetta þitt heilræði skal ek hafa, at fara til kirkju, segir þú þat ok satt, at mart ok mikit mun skilja herra Guðmund ok mik. Var herra Bótólfr, biskup í öllum hlutum hógværr ok litillátr, ok kom eigi stjórn á við sína undirmenn sem hæfði; var ok á hans dögum litill gaumr at gefinn, at halda upp jartegnum Guðmundar biskups. Var hann Hólabiskup um viij ár, ok fór utan ok andaðist í Niðarósi ok hvilir at Helgisetri."— *Biskupa Sögur* II. (containing the appendix, or *Viðbætir*, to the *Guðmundar Saga hins góða* by Abbot Arngrímur), pp. 186-187 (Kaupmannahöfn 1878).

the minds of the Icelanders, a familiar one. Ref, having killed a man in a feud—for feuds and killings were ordinary things in those days—is obliged to betake himself, as an outlaw, to Greenland, where he gets possession of some land in a not easily discovered and quite uninhabited region on the upper shores of a fjord, which lay far North of the Vestri-bygð, the remoter of the two districts of the Icelandic colony. This fjord is described with much detail, and has been supposed to be the Franz-Joseph's fjord, rediscovered some thirty years ago by the second German Arctic expedition.[17] Later on, King Harald harðráði of Norway sends another Icelandic voyager, Bárður, to Greenland to bring him back some of the products of that country. In executing his commission Bárð becomes intimate with Gunnar, the principal man of the colonists, and from him learns all about Ref, who has meanwhile got into fresh difficulties, not of his own seeking, and has been obliged to fortify his lonely dwelling on the distant inner fjord. Henceforward Bárð seems to regard it as a special mission to bring Ref to justice. But with the many turns of Ref's affairs—his clever evasions of his foes, his defences of his strongly guarded dwelling, to which he had even contrived to lead concealed water-pipes from the neighbouring mountains, his changes of name and abode—we have nothing further to do. Having assumed his final name of Sigtryggur, he rose to distinction under the protection of the king of Denmark, who assigned him a residence, in which he lived for many winters. At last he made himself ready for an expiatory pilgrimage to the holy city (*hjó hann ferð sínar út í Rómaborg og sótti heim hinn helga Pètur postula*, as they expressed it in the days of the saga-writers), but he fell mortally ill on his way back, and was buried in a rich monastery in France. Þormóður, his son, returned to Iceland after the fall of the Norwegian King Harald, who had pursued his father, acquired land at a place called Kvennabrekka, and married; from him, says the saga, have sprung many gifted men.

The chess episode of this tale is a somewhat obscure one.[18] Bárð, after we left him in Greenland, returned to Norway with a cargo, Gunnar seizing

[17] "Die zweite deutsche Nordpolarfahrt in den Jahren 1869 und 1870 unter Führung des Kapitän Karl Koldewey, Erster Band. Leipzig 1873." — This reference is given by Pálmi Pálsson, editor of the Króka-Refs Saga, in his preface (p. xxxi), but it has been impossible to verify it. He speaks of the identification of Ref's fjord with the Franz-Joseph's fjord as made by Dr. Konrad Maurer—the highest of all authorities on any matter relating to Iceland—but in the two essays on "Grönland im Mittelalter" and "Grönlands Wiederentdeckung," which Dr. Maurer contributed to the volume cited, no statement relating to such identification is to be found. In the same sentence Pálmi Pálsson also cites the "Sturlunga Saga" edited by Dr. Guðbrand Vigfússon (Oxford 1878), in the "Prolegomena" of which (p. lxiii), the editor says of the "Króka-Refs Saga" that it "shows real local knowledge on the part of the author, so that Dr. Maurer has even believed it possible to identify a firth which he describes as the lately-discovered Franz-Joseph's fjord." But Dr. Guðbrand Vigfússon gives no reference to any of Dr. Maurer's writings.

[18] "Gunnar sendir Haraldi konungi þrjá gripi; það var hvíta-björn fulltíða og vandr ágæta vel; annar gripr var tauntafl og gert með miklum hagleik; þriðji gripr var rostungshaus með öllum tönnum sínum, hann var grafinn allr og víða rent í gulli; tennurnar voru fastar í, hausinum; var það allt hin mesta gersimi. Bárðr lætr nú í haf og ferst vel; kom hann í þær stöðvar, sem hann mundi kjósa. Hann færði Haraldi konungi margan grænlenzkan varning ágætan. Ferr Bárðr fyrir konung einn dag og mælti: "Hjer er eitt tafl, herra, er yðr sendi hinn göfgazti maðr af Grænlandi, er Gunnar heitir, og vill ekki fé fyrir hafa, heldr vinfeingi yðar. Var eg með honum í vetr og varð mér hann góðr drengr; vill hann gjarna vera vin yðar." Það var bæði hneftafl og skáktafl. Konungr leit á um hrið og það hann hafa þökk fyrir, er slíkt sendi, "skulu vér víst vináttu vora á móti leggja."—*Króka-Refs Saga og Króka-Refs rímur*, udgiven af Pálmi Pálsson (Köbenhavn 1883), p. 23.

the occasion to send to King Harald three valuable gifts of Greenlandic origin. These are a full-grown white bear in good condition; a *tanntafl*, made with great skill; and the skull of a walrus (or perhaps some object formed out of the jaws), having all its teeth, which were carved and, in places, enamelled with gold. When the *tanntafl* is presented to the King, Bárðr accompanies the gift with this speech:—"Here is a *tafl*, my lord, which is sent to you by the foremost man in Greenland, who is called Gunnar; he demands nothing for it except your friendship. I was with him two winters, and he treated me nobly; he will most gladly have your favor." Then the writer adds: — "*Þat var hvárt hnefatafl eða skáktafl.*" This statement would be most interesting could we make sure of comprehending it rightly. *Tanntafl* (tann = tooth, or tusk) may mean:—1, a set of men used in playing any game of *tables*, made of (walrus) teeth, or (walrus) tusk; or it may possibly signify:—2, a board for such a game, made out of the same material; or one may conceive that it might include:—3, both the men and the board. This is, however, little more than guess-work, on account of the dubious signification of the word *tafl*, which we discuss elsewhere. It is also difficult to understand the final underscored phrase except by assigning to *tanntafl* the second of the three meanings which we have indicated. Literally the phrase reads:—"It [*i. e.* the *tanntafl*] was both a *hnefatafl* [board for playing *hnefatafl*] and a chess board." Now we do n't know precisely what short of a game *hnefatafl* was, nor can we be certain that the writer intends to say that the two games were played on a board, marked or designed in precisely the same way for whichever game it was used. It may possibly be that the surfaces used for the two games were of quite unlike forms, and that the board was both a *hnefaborð* and a *skákborð*, because one was drawn upon one side of the board and the other upon the other, as one sees old (or even modern) chessboards having upon the reverse side a fox-and-geese board, or a twelve-man-morris board. Were the meaning that only a chessboard, with its sixty-four squares, was represented, and that it was used also for *hnefatafl*, it would go far to tell us what *hnefatafl* was, namely, that it was draughts (checkers), or some allied sport. There is little doubt that an Icelander writing in the fourteenth century would know all about the game: perhaps it was even so familiar a diversion that the author of the saga took no pains to describe it precisely.

Mágus Saga.

In the varied domain of the literature written in the speech of Iceland a special field is occupied by the romantic or knightly sagas. These are mainly translations, or paraphrases, of tales drawn from the mediæval legendary cycles of western Europe. In their Icelandic form they date back to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, and are the work of writers attached to the Norwegian court. In one of these compositions, the long Karlamagnús saga, there is a casual mention of chess. It is stated—we quote from both the extant manuscripts, one of which is slightly earlier than the other—that the renowned champion Oddgeir (Holger Danske) was playing chess with Gloriant, a daughter of King Ammiral (*þau Oddgeir ok konungs dóttir léku at skáktafli*), when ill tidings were brought in, whereupon Oddgeir shoved the board from his knees and spake (*Oddgeir skaut taflborðinn af knjám sèr ok mælti*)[19] concerning the evil intelligence thus received.

[19] "Karlamagnús saga og kappa hans," edited by C. R. Unger (Christiania 1859), p. 111.

There is a still more incidental allusion to the game in another of these "sagas of the southern lands" (*sögur Suðurlanda*), as they have been styled. This is the "Tristrams saga ok Ísondar"—a romantic narrative, remotely of Celtic origin, which exists very nearly in the same form in early English (the poem of "Sir Tristrem," written in the last years of the 13th century), in Middle High German (the metrical romance, "Tristan und Isolde," written by Gottfried von Strassburg early in the 13th century), and in Icelandic (in prose). This last was translated from the French by command of King Hákon Hákonsson (the Old) of Norway in 1226. The author of the version is stated to be a monk called Robert, who is likewise named as translator of another of these stories of the South, the "Elis saga ok Rósamundu." Fragments of the Tristrams saga are to be found in a vellum codex of the 15th century (including, as it happens, the portion containing the references to chess, which does not vary essentially, in this respect, from the later transcript); but it is complete only in a paper MS of the 17th century. The French poem on the same theme, which served as the ground-text of the three versions here indicated, is almost wholly lost. As to the Northern saga, whoever the friar Robert might have been, his work was, at a later day, revamped by an Icelander in Iceland, but this production is inferior both in style and incident to the Norwegian narrative. It was likewise transformed in Iceland into a popular ballad (the "Tristramskvæði").[20] The hero of the saga, Tristram, at the date of the chess episode a boy of extraordinary activity and accomplishments—precocious youths are common in these old sagas, an indication of the early development in strength and character of the Scandinavian races—went one day with his fosterfather, his tutor and brothers, to visit a Norse vessel, which had just arrived in the harbor near the castle in which he dwelt, laden with many strange and rare things from divers lands. Tristram, already skilful in the languages, talked with the merchants and sailors, and bought some beautiful birds, which he gave to his brothers. Then, the saga goes on, he saw there a chessboard, and asked if any one of the merchants would play with him; one came forward, and they set the pieces, each staking at the same time a considerable sum on the game. When his fosterfather saw that he was sitting at the chessboard he said to him: —"My son, I am going home; your teacher will wait for you and accompany you, when you are ready." This master, who remained behind, was a courteous and gentle knight. But the merchants wondered at the youth, and praised his wisdom, his accomplishments, his beauty and agility, his quickness of wit and manly bearing, in which he excelled them all; and they thought that if they could carry him away with them, great gain would accrue to them from his expertness and proficiencies, and also that, if they chose afterwards to sell him, they might obtain a large sum of money. As the youth sat there absorbed in his game, they secretly hauled in the cable and anchor, and worked the ship out of the harbor. The boat had its awning up, and was moved along gently by the breeze and current, so that

[20] For an abstract of the story as rewritten in Iceland see: —"Die nordische und die englische version der Tristan-Sage," edited by Eugen Kölbing (Heilbronn 1878-82), I., pp. xv-xvi.—For the "Tristramskvæði" see the "Íslenzk fornkvæði," edited by Sven Grundtvig and Jón Sigurðsson (Kjøbenhavn 1854-85), I., pp. 186-207. But the ballad,—which is printed from three varying MSS—does not contain the chess incident, relating only to the loves and misfortunes of Tristram and Isönd.

Tristram was not aware of the changed situation until they were at a distance from the land. Then he said to the merchants:—"Why are you doing this?" They answered:—"Because we will that you accompany us." Then he began to weep and to be distressed, and to bewail, as did also the knight, out of his love to Tristram, their sad condition. Thereupon the Norsemen took his teacher and let him down into a boat, giving him an oar. And now the sails are set and the ship is at full speed, but Tristram is sitting sad and sorrowful at the mercy of these strangers.[21] Afterwards he wanders about —a Northern Ulysses—for a long time, meeting with many marvelous adventures. In the English poem, Tristrem, as he is there called, catches sight of a chessboard on a chair, and wagers with a sailor twenty shillings against a hawk; he wins six hawks, which he offers to his brothers; and his foster-father, Rohand, taking the fairest one, bids him good bye, and walks away with the other youths. Tristrem continues to play, and gains a hundred pounds by his skill, but suddenly noticing that the boat is moving, weeps sorely. Then his master is sent off with the boat and oar, and Tristrem is left a captive.[22]

A third one of these knightly romances, the "Bragða-Mágus saga," has two long chess episodes, not unlike each other. King Játmundur, by some called Loðóvíkus (*sumar nefna hann Júlianó, er hann tók keisaratign; en mér þikkir svo helzt til visa sá titull, er af œfi keisaranna er skrifaðr, at hann muni verit hafa sonarson Karlamagnús keisara, ok svo segja flestar bœkr, at hann hafi Loðóvikus heitit*), who ruled over Saxony (Saxland), finds a princess captive in the hands of a Jarl, Hirtungur, and longs to possess her. He demands the amount of her ransom. The Jarl replies that he will only release her in return for three objects of great value belonging to the King. These three things the Jarl was to be allowed to select. After consultation with one of his counsellors, the monarch tells the Jarl that he will accept the terms, with the proviso that, if he choose, he may subsequently redeem the three valuable objects by substituting for them two costly gold rings, which shall be deemed of half the value of the precious objects pawned; for the other half of the debt the Jarl and he are to play three games at chess, the winner to possess all the valuables in question. The Jarl agrees, and

[21] Besides the edition of this saga by Eugen Kölbing, already cited, there is another by the Icelandic scholar, Gisli Brynjúlfsson, "Saga af Tristram ok Ísönd samt Möttuls saga" (Kjöbenhavn 1878). The text of the passage cited is here taken from the edition of Kölbing (p. 18):—"Síðan sá hann þar skáktafisborð ok spurði, ef nokkurr kaupmanna vildi tefla við hann, ok einn fór til, ok settu þeir ok lögðu við mikit fé. Sem fóstri hans sá, at hann sat at skáktafisborði, þá mælti hann til hans: 'Son minn,' segir hann, 'ek geng heim, en meistari þinn biði þiu og fylgi þér heim, þá er þú ert búinn,' og dvaldist þá með hánum einn kurteiss og hæverskr riddari. En kaupmenn undruðu þenna unga mann og lofuðu kunnustu hans, list ok fegrð ok atgörð, vizku ok meðferð, er hann upp lék þá alla, og íhuguðu þeir, at ef þeir kœmi hánum brutt með sèr, at þeim myndi mikit gagn af standa hans kunnustu ok margfræði, svá ok, ef þeir vilja selja hann, þá fá þeir mikit fé fyrir hann. Sem hann sat geymandi leiksins, þá drógu þeir upp sem leyniligast strengi sina ok akkeri ok létu út bera skipit úr váginum. Skipit var tjaldat ok rak fyrir vindinum ok strauminum, svá at Tristram varð ekki varr við fyr enn þeir váru fjarri landi; þá mælti hann til kaupmanna: —'Herrar,' segir hann, 'hví vili þér svá göra?' Þeir segja:—'Fyrir því at vér viljum, at þú fylgir oss.' Þá tók hann þegar at gráta ok illa láta ok sjálfan sik harmandi ok svá riddarinn, sakir ástsemdar; ok þá tóku Norðmenn meistara hans ok létu á bát ok fengu hánum ár eina. Nú er uppi seglit ok skipit fullskriða, en Tristram sitr nú í þeirra valdi í harmi ok hugsótt."

[22] In the second volume of Kölbing's work is the English "Sir Tristrem," of which Sir

says:—"I need not go to your camp or treasury to select the three things I desire; I choose, as ransom for the maiden, the horse you now sit on; the falcon which rests on your wrist; and the sword which hangs at your side." "Even if you had searched my treasury," replies the King, "you could not have chosen three objects which I so unwillingly part with; but, however that may be, I shall stand by our agreement." He then strips himself of the three rare possessions, and sends them by his man Hrólfur to the princess that she may herself purchase her freedom. But he orders to be brought a beautiful chessboard which he owns, and declares himself already ready to play the three stipulated games. The two begin their

Walter Scott published in 1804 an elaborate edition. The following stanzas (XXIX–XXXIII) describe the carrying off of Tristram: —

A cheker he fond bi a cheire
He asked, who wold play.
Þe mariner spac bonair:
"Child, what wiltow lay?"
"Ogain an hauke of noble air
Tventi schillinges, to say:
Whether so mates oþer fair,
Bere hem boþe oway."
Wiþ wille
Þe mariner swore his faye:
"For soþe, ich held þer tille!"

Now boþe her wedde lys
And play þai biginne;
Ysett he haþ þe long asise
And endred beþ þer inne.
Þe play biginneþ to arise,
Tristram deleþ atvinne;
He dede als so þe wise:
He gaf has he gan winne
In raf;
Of playe ar he wald blinne,
Sex haukes he gat and gaf.

Rohand toke leue to ga,
His sones he cleped oway;
Þe fairest hauke he gan ta,
Þat Tristrem wan þat day.
Wiþ him he left ma
Pans for to play;
Þe mariner swore al so,
Þat pans wold he lay
An stounde;
Tristrem wan þat day
Of him an hundred pounde.

Tristrem wan þat þer was layd.
A tresoun þer was made.
No lenger þan þe maister seyd,
Of gate nas þer no bade.
As þai best sat and playd,
Out of hauen þai rade;
Opon þe se so gray
Fram þe brimes brade
Gun flete:
Of lod þai were wel glade,
And Tristrem sore wepe.

His maister þan þai fand
A bot and an are:
Hye seyden: "Zond is þe land,
And here schaltow to bare:
Chese on aiþer hand,
Whether þe leuer ware
Sink or stille stand:
Þe child schal wiþ ous fare
On flod!"
Tristrem wepe ful sare,
Þai loug and þougt it gode.

These stanzas are in volume II of Kölbing's publication, pp. 11-12. Once more, in this old English poem, chess is mentioned. It is when Tristram goes to Ireland. He had been severely wounded, but he was still a man fair to gaze at (stanza CXII, p. 35): —

An heye man he was like,
Þei he wer wounded sare;
His gles weren so sellike,
Þat wonder þougt hem þare.
His harp, his croude was rike;
His tables, his ches he bare.

Here is a distinction made between *tables* and *chess*, as elsewhere in early English.

games. The first one is of long duration, but at last the King finds himself mated by his adversary's rook (*Konungr fékk hróksmát*). The Jarl at once exclaims:—"I have won the precious objects; I don't care to play any more." The King answers:—"We shall now play the second game." Then they played the second time, and that contest turned out much worse. The King had to submit to a mate given by a pawn. The Jarl said:—"Little consolation do you derive from the game of chess, for now I own your costly objects; methinks you must see by this time that you cannot play against me. Besides I would rather that you retain your beloved pieces of property; so we won't play any longer, since I do not care to offend you too grievously." But the King cried out:—"Do you think you have me in your power? We shall play the whole match as agreed upon." "I merely wished," said the Jarl, "to save you from the most disgraceful of all mates." That ill speech made the King so angry that he could give little heed to the final game, which terminated in a mate given by the very pawn opposite the monarch's king at its first move.[23] The Jarl suddenly rose and rushed into the castle. The King was greatly enraged against the Jarl, and longed to get back, by any means, the treasures he had lost; but the Jarl guarded his castle on every side, and went up into the tower and, looking down at the King, shouted:—"Thus do we play with over-bearing men!"[24] And the princess was no more in the King's power than before he sent her his horse, his falcon and his sword.

Before we reach the next mention of chess in the saga a new character comes upon the scene, namely, the fifteen year old Rögnvaldur, a son of the

[23] The definition of this mate is not very clear. It seems to be a mate given by the pawn of the adversary which stands on the king's file, and which—one of the weakest of the chessmen—ventures to move straight at the enemy's most important piece. At least, this is the definition found in the old lexicon of Olaus Verelius, "Index lingvæ veteris Scytho-Scandiæ" (Upsaliæ 1691), pp. 81-82 *sub voce*. The name of the mate, as given in the text, is *fretstertumát*, a vulgar epithet, if taken in its literal meaning. But Johan Fritzner, in his "Ordbog over det gamle norske Sprog" (2d edition, Kristiania 1866), I., p. 485, *sub voce*, declares its real derivation to be from *fers* (= vizier), the mediæval name of the queen—he refers to v. d. Linde's "Geschichte des Schachspiels" in this connection—and its apparent relation with the Icelandic verb *freta* (of coarse signification) to be thus only an instance of erroneous popular etymology. See also his explanation of the synonymous vocable, *fuðryttumát*, in which he rather complicates the matter. The truth is that these terms are by no means the sole instances of such forcible and ungentle expressions used to describe the mates possible in the now antiquated style of chess-play in Iceland. For other examples, see the "Kvæði eptir Stefán Ólafsson," edited by Dr. Jón Þorkelsson, the younger (Kaupmannahöfn 1885) II, p. 49, as well as the essay in the present volume by Mr. Ólafur Davíðsson. These vulgar appellations are now wholly out of date among Icelandic players. But consult on all these subjects various later pages in the present volume.

[24] "Konungr lætr taka eitt ágætt tafl, er hann átti. Taka þeir þá til at tefla, ok varð þetta tafl mjök langt, en svo lýkr þeirra í millum at konungr fékk hróksmát. Jarl mælti: unnit hefi ek gripina, ok hirði ek eigi lengr at tefla. Konungr mælti: tefla skulum vit annat tafl. Þeir tefldu nú annat, ok er þat miklu skemmra, ok fékk konungr peðsmát. Jarl mælti: lítit traust megi þèr hafa á taflinu, ok á ek nú gripina; þikki mèr þat nú reynt, attú fáist ekki við mik at tefla. Nú vil ek heldr, attú eigir einn gripina, ok teflum vit eigi lengr, því at ek vil eigi angra hug þinn. Konungr mælti: hyggst þú þá eiga vald á mér? Skulum vit tefla öll töfl, sem mælt var. Jarl mælti: eigi mun þat ok þurfa at spara at gera þik sem hrakligastan í mátinu. Við þat illmæli varð konungr reiðr, svo hann gáði ekki at taflinu; gekk þetta tafl skemmst af, ok fékk konungr fretstertumát. Spratt jarl snart á fœtr, ok hafði sik inn í borgina. Konungr varð mjök reiðr jarli, ok vildi fyrir hvetvetna fá aptr þá gripi, er jarl af honum tefldi. Jarl lœtr nú aptr lúka öll borgarhliðin; síðan gengr hann í turninn, er yfir hliðinu var, ok mælti: svo erum vèr vanir at leika ofstopamenn."—*Bragða-Mágus Saga*, edited by Gunnlaugur Þórðarson (Kaupmannahöfn 1858), pp. 22-23.

Jarl Ámundi. Though still a boy, he—like Tristram, of whom we have just read—was an adept in all the accomplishments of the day, and it was whispered that King Loðóvíkus (Louis), though older, was filled with jealousy of the precocious youth. Just then, as we are told, the King was keeping high festival, and he and all his ministers and men-at-arms drank deeply at daily banquets; and there was a good deal of talk, says the sagaman, "as there is wont to be at drink." This talk turned one day on the many arts known to the King. In the course of it some of the retainers asked a man called Úlfur (Wolf) whether he thought it possible to find in the land any one who was the King's equal in feats of skill; of course, they added, there can be nobody who would not shirk playing chess with him. Úlf said it was not unlikely that a person might be found who could play that game nearly as well as the King. The others asserted that there could be no one in the world able to do even that, and one of the men, Sveinn by name, added:—"We know that you are thinking that Rögnvald jarlsson does n't play any worse than the King." "I don't say that," replied Úlf, "but I do think that Rögnvald plays well." Sveinn then said:—"It would be futile to put Rögnvald before the King in regard to any sport or skill, but the King shall know what disgrace you are casting upon him and his rank." "Repeat my words rightly to the King, and I shall not disavow them," retorted Úlf. Sveinn replied:—"It will not need to report worse ones," and the company separated. Not long after, the King sent for Úlf, and said to him:—"We learn that you declare Rögnvald jarlsson to be better at chess than we." Úlf said that those were not his true words, "for I have never thought of underrating your strength at chess, or at any other art, but often I do not remember what I say over my drink." After some not very pleasant discussion the King said:—"Two conditions I desire to lay upon you; the first is that Rögnvald must meet me at chess; the second is that otherwise I must have you slain." Úlf replied:—"Bold is a man when his life's at stake; if you make it a mortal matter, then I must try to get Rögnvald to play with you." Úlf then goes off to ask the young champion to come to his rescue by meeting the King over the board. The Queen, unhappy at the prospect of bloodshed, sends a message to Rögnvald urging him to accept the King's challenge. Rögnvald declared that he consented—chiefly because the Queen wished him to do so—on condition that the playing should take place outside the King's castle; a grove near the castle, in which tournaments were held, was accordingly selected and the day for the combat fixed. Rögnvald's father, a man of frank and upright character, predicted much evil from the encounter, but all met at the appointed hour and place, including many courtiers of the court, and also the Queen. Rögnvald told his men to see that the horses of himself and his brothers were saddled as soon as the chessplay seemed to be half over. On arrival he found the King and Queen seated on chairs, of which there were two others. Rögnvald, after saluting the sovereigns, took one of the seats and awaited the King's pleasure. A chessboard was lying on the knees of the King, who began by saying:—"Is it true, Rögnvald, that you have offered to play with me, and that you call yourself a better chessplayer than I?" Whereupon Rögnvald:—"That I have not said, but they have announced to me that you bade me come to chess with you to-day; although I do not know too much about the game, still I am willing to act according to

your wish and play, for I do not care even if I am mated by you (*þótt ek fái mát af yðr*)." The King exclaimed:—"Your speech is ill, but not the less shall you now play; but where is your stake?" Quoth Rögnvald:—"I have brought no stake, for I have no mind to play as a champion or rival." The King replied:—"On the chair beside you hang three rings of gold; those shall I wager; but if you have not other three rings, then you shall wager your head; methinks, in that case, you will not spare your strength." To which Rögnvald:—"I do not take your jest in earnest, lord, and I will not let my head be staked, for it is not a thing to be sold or bartered." The Queen interfered to make peace, but was sternly rebuked by her spouse. To spare her, Rögnvald hastened to state that he would play for his own head, or in any other way the King might wish, "for we are all your men." Then the table was set up. The King claimed the first move as lord and master. They began to play at the hour of breakfast (nine o'clock), and at noon the game was finished, and Rögnvald won, though there was slight difference in the positions. He arose and said:—"Now have I gained this game, but only because of the King's carelessness, in that he has not chosen to display his real strength; so I will not take the stake, for I think it more proper that he should retain it." After this Rögnvald resumed his seat, and they placed the men for another game, which reached its end before three o'clock; the King had to yield to the rook's mate. Rögnvald arose as before, but there is no need to repeat his words. The King, by this time, was filled with wrath. They sat down for the third game, but that came to an end not long after three, with a mate inflicted by a pawn (*ok fékk konungr peðs-mát*). The King, in his anger, upset the pieces, and swept them into their pouch. Everybody was unarmed except Vigvarður, Rögnvald's eldest brother; he carried a great battle-axe, and, standing behind the King, while play was going on, stiffly held his huge weapon at guard. Rögnvald's youngest brothers, one twelve and the other nine years of age, were on his either hand. When the final game was concluded, Rögnvald stood up and said:—"This is a case quite otherwise than might have been expected; I have played with the King, and he has combated as a champion, putting forth all the chess arts which he has been able to acquire, and has lost these three games, together with the three gold rings which he wagered; he has been miserably beaten in the final game, in that I have given him mate with a paltry pawn. I cannot see why I should willingly try any further exercises of skill with him, for it seems to me that he does everything worse and worse, and therefore shall we separate; but I shall take the rings, and he can take the scorn of all for his folly and vehemence." By this time the King had got the chessmen well into their pouch, and said in reply to Rögnvald's speech:—"Not thus shall we part," and springing to his feet, struck with the pouch full at the face of Rögnvald, so that the blood flowed from it. At the same time he cried:—"Take that with your stake, until we can cover you with the greater shame, which you have so well merited." Said Rögnvald to the King:—"I do not take into account such small matters at this time; I see that this must be a jest of yours." Then Rögnvald and his two young brothers went to their horses.[25] But the oldest brother, Vigvarður, was nowhere visible. They

[25] "Síðan reisa þeir taflit. Konungr vildi hafa þat fyrir ríkis mun at draga fram fyrri. Þeir tóku at tefla at dagmálum, en þat var úti at hádegi, ok varð enn litli munr, ok blaut Rögnvaldr. Hann stóð þá upp ok mælti: nú hefi ek hlotit tafl þetta, ok er þetta af öngvu,

rode off without finding him, but soon learned that he remained behind to some purpose; for, enraged at the treatment of Rögnvald, he used his battle-axe to cleave the unworthy King's head. Thus this unhappy chess-match led to many woes. The Queen incited the emperor Carloman to avenge the death of her husband, but, after much fighting, the clever Rögnvald was reconciled with the powerful monarch, married the beautiful Queen Ermenga, and passed his last years in peace, encountering, as may be hoped, no more such stormy chess incidents as the one here recorded.[26]

Other Sagas.

In the Viglundar saga, one of the fictitious sagas, or wholly invented tales which came long after the close of the classic period, and are little

nema athugaleysi konungs, því at hann hefir engi tafilbrögð sín meiri frammi haft; mun ek ekki heimta þetta tafifé, því at mèr þikkir allvel komit, þótt hann hafi. Síðan settist Rögnvaldr niðr, ok settu þeir annat tafl, ok var því lokit fyrir nón; fèkk konungr hróksmát. Rögnvaldr stóð þá upp með sama hœtti ok fyrr, ok þarf þat eigi optar at greina. Konungr varð nú harðla reiðr. Settu þeir taflit þriðja; var þat lokit þá skammt var af nóni, ok fèkk konungr peðsmát. Konungr svarfar þá taflinu, ok berr í punginn. Allir menn voru þar vopnlausir, nema Vigvarðr; hann gekk með öxi mikla. Hann stóð jafnan á baki konungs, meðan þeir tefldu, við reidda öxina. Markvarðr sat á aðra hönd Rögnvaldi, en Aðalvarðr á aðra. Rögnvaldr stóð þá upp ok mœlti: nú mun vita við öðruvís, enn menn mundu œtla; ek hefi tefit við konung, en hann hefir tefit af kappi, ok lagt fram öll tafilbrögð, þau er hann þikkist kunna, ok hefir hann nú látit þessi þrjú töfl ok þrjá gullhringa, er hann hefir við lagt, ok svo vesalliga yfirkominn í síðasta tafli, at hann fékk af mèr hit fúlasta peðsmát. Nú kann ek ei þat sjá á mínu ráði, at þreyta þurfi við hann fleiri íþróttir, því at ek þikkjumst vita, at hann kunni allar verr, en þá munu vit at því skilja, ok mun ek hafa hringa þessa, en hann mun hafa spott af öllum fyrir sína heimsku ok kappgirni. Konungr hafði þá í borit taflit punginn. Hann mœlti: ekki skulum vèr at þessu skiljast. Sprettr hann á fætr reiðr, ok slær með punginum framan á nasir Rögnvaldi, svo at blóð fèll um hann. Konungr mœlti: haf nú þetta með taflfènu, þar til vèr miðlum þèr meiri svivirðing, sem þú hefir til unnit. Rögnvaldr mœlti: herra, ekki bregð ek mèr svo mjök við slíkt at sinni; finn ek, at þetta mun vera glens yðvart. Gekk Rögnvaldr þá í brutt ok tveir brœðr hans með hánum ok til hesta sinna." — *Bragða-Mágus Saga*, edited by Gunnlaugur Þórðarson (Kaupmannahöfn 1858), pp. 43-45.

[26] Another and earlier MS of this saga was edited by Gustaf Cederschiöld in his "Fornsögur Suðrlanda" (Lund 1884), pp. 1-42, the text of which differs somewhat from the later one which we have cited. In the introduction to his collection, Cederschiöld treats interestingly of the origin of the Mágus saga (pp. lxxx-lxxxvi). In the MS he uses, the King, Játmundur, who contended in the first chess episode with Hirting, is here called emperor, and Hirting is introduced as Iringur, Jarl of Ireland. The result of the three games is the same, but after the first contest, when his opponent tries to decline the priceless objects, and to terminate the match, the emperor says:—"You can't be allowed to run away without having received checkmate; for now I intend to give you a most scurrilous mate." The other, or Rögnvald episode, though more concisely recorded, does not vary much from that in the younger transcript. The saga exists in both French ("Quatre fils d'Aimon," or "Renaud de Montauban") and Dutch ("Renout van Montalbæn"), the latter from the end of the thirteenth century. In both, the main incident is the chess match between Rögnvald (Renaud) and the King. The first of these productions was well known to the Englishman, Alexander Neckham (Neckam), and is mentioned in the chapter *De Scaccis* of his book, "De naturis rerum," the date of which is about 1180. In the course of the chapter the writer exclaims:—"O quot millia animarum transmissa sunt occasione illius ludi, quo Reginaldus [Rögnvald] filius Eymundi in calculo ludens militem generosum cum illo ludentem in palatio Karoli magni cum uno scaccorum interemit!" Cederschiöld opines that if the author of the Icelandic version learned the story outside of France it was probably in England—to which, as we have seen in another place, not a few Icelanders of literary ability resorted in this very twelfth century. Gaston Paris supposes that Neckham knew the legend in an Anglo-Norman rendering now lost. The story of Mágus reached the North in the 13th century, and may have come first to Norway, but it is remarkable that all the MSS containing it are the work of Icelandic hands. The oldest one dates back nearly to the year 1300.

esteemed, there is a not uninteresting allusion to chess. The principal manuscript of the saga (Arnamagnæan collection, 510, 4°) dates from the close of the 15th century, and the text is probably not much older. One of the characters proposes to another to play [chess], which they do. But the invited player, Örn by name, gives little heed to the game because he pays too much to the lady of the house (the wife of the other player), and he was therefore about to be mated (*at honum var komit at máti*). But the lady in question comes in, and advises him, in a metrical speech, to move a certain piece. His opponent deprecates the interference of his wife, who counsels his adversary, and tells the latter that she does it only because he is younger. But Örn follows the advice given, and is able to make a drawn game (*Örn tefldi þat er til var lagt og var þá jafntefli*). Though chess is not mentioned, nor the name of any piece given, the expressions *at máti* (towards a mate), *at öðrum reiti* (to another square), and *jafntefli* (drawn game) indicate that the game was chess.[27]—The passage in the Hervarar Saga ok Heiðreks konungs, in which the word *skáktafl* occurs, in one of the two oldest MSS, is as follows:—"Einn dag er Guðmundr lèk skáktafl, ok hans tafl var mjök svá farit, þá spurði hann, ef nokkr kynni honum ráð til at leggja. Þá gekk til Hervarðr, ok lagði litla stund til, áðr Guðmundar var vænna." It is these sentences of which Dr. Guðbrandur Vigfússon says that the word *skák*, in *skáktafl*, proves nothing as to the age of chess in Iceland, since its use is here mythical. The passage from the original text which we have given is in the prose portion of the Hervarar Saga, in a fragment from one of the codices (copied not long after 1400), called by a distinctive name:—"Saga Heiðreks konungs hins vitra," and may be thus rendered:—"One day, when Guðmund was playing chess, and his game was going badly, he asked if no one could aid him with good advice. Hervarður then came forward, and gave the matter a little attention until Guðmund was in better condition."—There are possibly a few passages in sagas that we have not mentioned, in which the writers may have had chess in their minds when using the word *tafl*. But they must be examined when the whole theme is treated more thoroughly, and more intelligently, by future investigators.[28]

[27] "Þikir mèr nú ráð, at vit skemtim okkr ok teflim; ok svo gerðu þeir. Litt gáði Orn at taflinu fyrir hug þeim er hann hafði á húsfreyju svo at honum var komit at máti. Ok í því kom húsfreyja í stofuna ok sá á taflit ok kvað þenna visuhelming:

Þoka mundir þú þundar
Þinni töflu hinn gjöfli,
Ráð eru tjalda tróðu,
Teitr at öðrum reiti.

Bóndi leit til hennar ok kvað: —

Enu er mótsnúin manni
Menlin í dag sinum,
Elnskis má nema elli
Auðbaldr frá þèr gjalda.

Örn tefldi þat er til var lagt ok var þá jafntefli."—*Bárðarsaga Snæfellsáss, Víglundarsaga*, edited by Guðbrandr Vigfússon (Kjøbenhavn 1860), p. 87.

[28] See the "Fornaldar sögur" (1829), I., p. 523; and the "Icelandic-English Dictionary" of Guðbrandur Vigfússon, sub voce *skák*, as quoted hereafter in the pages devoted to chess "Among the Lexicographers."

3. — The Story of Frithiof.[29]

There is a romantic, or non-historical, saga, the action of which is largely laid in a tract in Norway, which is styled Frithiof's Saga. In it there is an episode describing a game at "tables," of the sort known in ancient times as "hnefatafl," between two of the characters. The passage has been thus Englished: — "They [the sons of King Bele] sent their fosterer to Frithiof to bid him come help them against King Ring. Now Frithiof sat at the knave-play [*hnefatafl*] when Hilding came thither, who spoke thus: — 'Our Kings send thee greeting, Frithiof, and would have thy help in battle against King Ring, who cometh against their realm with violence and wrong.' Frithiof answered him nought, but said to Björn, with whom he was playing: — 'A bare place in thy board, foster-brother, and nowise mayst thou amend it; nay, for my part I shall beset thy red piece there, and wot whether it be safe.' Then Hilding spake again: — 'King Helgi bade me say thus much, Frithiof, that thou shouldst go on this journey with them, or else look for ill at their hands when they at last come back.' 'A double game, foster-brother,' said Björn; 'and two ways to meet thy play.' Frithiof said: — 'Thy play is to fall first on the knave, yet the double game is sure to be.' No other out-come of his errand had Hilding; he went back speedily to the Kings, and told them Frithiof's answer. They asked Hilding what he made out of those words. He said: — 'Whereas he spake of the bare place he will have been thinking of the lack in this journey of yours; but when he said he would beset the red piece, that will mean Ingibjörg, your sister; so give ye all the heed ye may to her. But whereas I threatened him with ill from you, Björn deemed the game a double one; but Frithiof said that the knave must be set on first, speaking thereby of King Ring.'"[30]

On the incidents of this Icelandic saga, Esaias Tegnér, the foremost of Swedish poets, built, in the first quarter of this century, his immortal poem of

[29] See the *Chess Monthly* (New York 1859), III., pp. 265-268.

[30] This English version of the episode of the game at "tables," in the original Saga of Frithiof, is from "Three Northern Love Stories," translated by Eirikur Magnússon and William Morris (London 1875), p. 73. For another rendering see the English version of Tegner's "Frithiof's Saga" by George Stephens (Stockholm 1839), pp. 7-8 of the introductory matter, which includes the whole saga in English. The Icelandic text is as follows: — Sendu þeir Hilding fóstra til Friðþjófs og skyldi biðja hann að fara til liðs með kongunum. Friðþjófur sat að hnefatafli, er Hildingur kom. Hann mælti svo: "Kongar vorir sendu þjer kveðju og vildu hafa liðsinni þitt til orustu í móti Hringi kongi, er ganga vill á riki þeirra með ofsa og ójafnaði." Friðþjófur svarar honum engu og mælti til Bjarnar, er hann teflði við: "Bil er þarna, fóstbróðir, og muntu ei bregða því, heldur mun eg setja að hinni rauðu töflunni, og vita hvort henni er forðað." Hildingur mælti þá aptur: "Svo það Helgi kongur mig segja þjer, Friðþjófur, að þú skyldir fara í herför þessa, eða þú mundir sæta afarkostum, þá er þeir kæmi aptur." Björn, mælti þá: "Tvikostur er þarna, fóstbróðir, og tvo vegu frá að telja." Friðþjófur sagði: "Þá mun ráð að sitja fyrst að hnefanum, og mun þá verða ótrauður tvikosturinn." Engan fjekk Hildingur annan úrskurð sinna erinda; fór hann aptur skjótt til móts við kongana og sagði þeim svör Friðþjófs. Þeir spyrja Hilding, hverja þýðingu hann tæki úr þessum orðum. Hildingur sagði: "Þar er hann ræddi um bilið, þar mun hann á bil hyggja um þessa ferð með ykkur; en þar er hann ljest setja mundi að fögru töflunni, það mun koma til Ingibjargar systur ykkar; gætið hennar vel svo víst; en þá er eg hjet honum afarkostum af ykkur, það virti Björn tvikost, en Friðþjófur kvað, að hnefanum mundi verða fyrst lagt; það mælti hann til Hrings kongs. — *Sagan och rimorna om Friðþiófr hinn frækni*, edited by Ludvig Larsson (Kebenhavn 1893) pp. 5-6.

Frithiof's Saga. It may be styled a love-epos, composed of lyrics, in each of which the metre corresponds to the sense. As the commentators of his time rendered the name given to the game in the old saga by "chess," the poet was enabled, partly by paraphrasing the original account of the game, partly by availing himself of his knowledge of chess and its nomenclature, to construct, out of this portion of the saga, a lyric of striking interest. Thus, although the anonymous author of the Icelandic saga did not have chess in his mind, but quite a different game, Tegnér, by the sixth song or canto of his poem ("Frithiof plays chess"), has managed to connect, by a new link, the art of chess with Icelandic literature. [31]

The story of the poem follows closely that of the saga. The hero of the poem, as of the saga, is Frithiof, a Norse peasant-warrior; the heroine is Ingeborg, a daughter and sister of kings. These two were placed, when young, under the care and in the house of the same foster-father, Hilding, where their affections soon turned to each other. King Bele, who was on terms of intimacy with his bold brother-in-arms, Thorsteinn, the father of Frithiof, did not look with displeasure upon this disposal of his daughter's hand. But, unfortunately, Bele and his friend, Thorsteinn, died, and the haughty sons of the King came to reign in his stead. They had no idea of seeing the proud blood of Odin mingle with that of a peasant, and Frithiof's suit was sternly and publicly rejected. The disappointed hero retires to his estate, full of bitter thoughts against his sovereigns. But all at once a war breaks out between the sons of Bele and a neighboring monarch, King Ring

[31] Tegnér first published some cantos (XIX-XXIV) of his poem in a literary journal "Iduna," in its eighth (1820) and ninth (1821) parts. This magazine appeared at Stockholm, and was the organ of the "Gothic Union" (götiska förbundet) — a bellettristic society, which, drawing its inspiration from the old Scandinavian literature and history, and from patriotic themes, made a revolution in Swedish letters. "Frithiofs Saga" was issued in its complete form at Stockholm in 1825, and has since gone through a great number of editions. Such is still its popularity that it is not uncommon to meet Swedes who can repeat from memory the entire poem. It has been rendered into nearly all the languages of Europe — even the modern Greek and the ancient Latin — and into some of them by many different hands. Two Danish-Norwegian renderings came out almost immediately — one by J. O. Miller (Copenhagen 1826), and the other (Bergen 1826) by H. Foss; they were soon followed by several others. The first German version was by Ludolph Schley in 1826 (Upsala); the first English rendering was that of William Strong in 1833 (London); the first French one was not issued until 1845 (Paris) by Mlle R. du Paget; the first Dutch one was given to the public in 1851 (Utrecht) by P. L. F. C. von Eichstorff, and in the same year the poem appeared in Italian (Verona), rendered by Alessandro Bazzoni. The earliest Slavonic version was the Russian one of 1841, followed by a Polish one in 1856 — parts having appeared previously. Into Hungarian many portions of the work were translated at an early day, but the poem was issued complete only in 1867 (Budapest). Later are the translations into Finnish (1872), Bohemian (1891), and other tongues. The best English version — so far as it goes — is that by Longfellow, first printed in the "North American Review" of Boston (n° xlvi. July 1837, p. 149), but unhappily it consists only of fragments, and the chess lyric is not among them. The poem has been frequently illustrated — best, perhaps, by the Swedish artist, Malmström (Stockholm 1868), whose designs have been published with texts in Swedish, Danish, German and English — the last-named in Boston. The most recent illustrated edition is the German rendering by Emil Engelman (Stuttgart 1887), adorned with engravings from drawings by a group of noted German artists. Frithiof's Saga has been more than once dramatized, and all its most popular cantos have been repeatedly set to music by Scandinavian and German composers. An excellent bibliography of the Icelandic saga, and its poetical paraphrase by Tegnér, was prepared by Gottfried von Leinburg (2d ed., Frankfurt 1872) — fairly complete down to 1871 — and was issued, together with the Swedish text, a German prose translation, very full illustrative notes, and a complete Swedish-German vocabulary; it is to be regretted that Leinburg's lists of editions, translations and comments, have not been continued.

(for, in that day, Norway was partitioned among various sovereigns), and Frithiof's good sword and warlike skill are needed. The Kings consequently send Hilding on an embassy to the affronted warrior. Hilding finds him playing chess with his trusted companion, Björn. The indirect, allegorical way in which Frithiof contrives, by addressing remarks concerning the game to his adversary, to answer Hilding's queries, is thus described by the poet. We translate literally, and do not attempt to preserve either rhyme or metre: —

Frithiof plays Chess.

Björn and Frithiof both were sitting
At a chessboard fair to gaze at;
Every other square was silver,
Every other one was gold.

Then came Hilding in: "Be seated!
Take the fitting chair of honor,
Quaff thy horn till I the combat
Finish, foster-father good!"

Hilding quoth: — "From sons of Bele
Come I now to thee beseeching;
Full of evil are the tidings,
And to thee the country looks."

Frithiof quoth: — "Be wise and wary,
Björn; for now the King's in danger;
Sacrifice a Pawn [32] and save him,
Pawns are made for sacrifice."

"Frithiof, rouse not Kings to anger,
Sturdy grow the eaglets' pinions;
Though 'gainst King their force be feeble
Mighty is their power to thine."

"So my castle, Björn, thou threat'nest!
Fearlessly I wait the onset;
Not so easy is its capture,
Defended by my trusty men."

Ingeborg in Balder's garden
All the day-long sits a-weeping;
Cannot she to strife entice thee —
The weeper fair with eyes of blue?"

"The Queen, Björn, thou vainly huntest; —
Dear to me in every contest
She's the chessfield's noblest figure,
Howe'er it go she must be saved."

"Frithiof, wilt thou never answer?
Shall thy foster-father leave thee —
Unheard from thy tower departing
Because thy doll-play will not end?"

Frithiof then arose, and taking
Hilding's hand in his responded: —
"Father, I've already answered,
Thou hast heard my soul's resolve.

Ride and tell the sons of Bele
What I've said; they scorned my friendship,
Broken are the bonds that bound us,
Never will I be their man."

"Well, follow then the path thou choosest,
I cannot thy anger censure,
Great Odin guide all things aright!"
Spake old Hilding as he went. [33]

The modern Icelandic translation of Tegnér's poem was first published at Reykjavík in 1866 under the title of "Friðþjófssaga," and was rendered in the original metres. It may, with truth, be said that the reading of this version affords even greater pleasure than the perusal of the Swedish original. In the first place, the rendering is very exact, and the melody of the verse most effectively reproduced, and, in the second place, not only the proper names and the old mythological terms, but even the incidents of the tale have an effect, when given in the language of the saga, which it is difficult to match in any modern tongue. The translator is the Rev. Matthías Jochumsson (*b.* November 11, 1835), the foremost Icelandic poet of the present generation, who has published many volumes of original verse, while among his

[32] The play upon words cannot be preserved in English; *bonde*, the Swedish vocable, signifies both *pawn* and *peasant*, and Frithiof was himself a peasant.

[33] A freer translation is that by the Rev. William Lewery Blackley (Dublin 1857), though

translated works are four of Shakespeare's plays ("Macbeth," "Othello," "Hamlet" and "Romeo and Juliet"). We give his version of the chess-

perhaps not the best of the many English versions. We quote it from the American reprint edited by Bayard Taylor (New York 1867), and we add, side by side with it, the Swedish text: —

Frithiof plays Chess.

Frithiof sat with Björn the true
At the chess-board, fair to view;
Squares of silver decked the frame,
Interchanged with squares of gold.

Hilding entering, thus he greeted: —
"On the upper bench be seated;
Drain the horn until my game
I finish, foster-father bold."

Quoth Hilding: — Hither come I speeding,
For King Bele's sons entreating;
Danger daily sounds more near,
And the people's hope art thou."

"Björn," quoth Frithiof, "now beware;
Ill thy King doth seem to fare;
A pawn may free him from his fear,
So scruple not to let it go."

"Court not, Frithiof, Kings' displeasure,
Though with Ring they ill may measure;
Yet eagles' young have wings of power,
And their force thy strength outvies."

"If, Björn, thou wilt my tower beset,
Thus easily thy wile I meet;
No longer canst thou gain my tower,
Which back to place of safety hies."

"Ingeborg, in Balder's keeping,
Passeth all her days in weeping;
Thine aid in strife may she not claim,
Fearful maiden, azure-eyed."

What wouldst thou, Björn? Assail my queen,
Which dear from childhood's days hath been—
The noblest piece in all the game?
Her I'll defend, whate'er betide."

"What! Frithiof, wilt thou not reply?
And shall thy foster-father hie
Unheeded from thy hearth away.
Because thy game is long to end?"

Then stood Frithiof up, and laid
Hilding's hand in his, and said:
"Already hast thou heard me say
What answers to their prayers I send.

"Go, let the sons of Bele learn
That, since my suit they dared to spurn,
No bond between us shall be tied,
Their serf I never shall become."

"Well! follow on thy proper path;
Ill fits it me to chide thy wrath.
All to some good may Odin guide,"
Hilding said, and hied him home.

Frithiof spelar Schack.

Björn och Frithiof suto båda,
Vid ett schackbord, skönt at skåda,
Silfver var hvarannan ruta,
Och hvarannan var af guld.

Då steg Hilding in: "Sitt neder,
Upp i högbänk jag dig leder,
Töm ditt horn, och låt mig sluta
Spelet, fosterfader huld!"

Hilding qvad: "Från Beles söner,
Kommer jag till dig med böner,
Tidningarne äro onde,
Och till dig står landets hopp."

Frithiof qvad: "Tag dig till vara,
Björn, ty nu är kung i fara.
Frälsas kan han med en bonde,
Den är gjord att offras opp."

"Frithiof, reta icke kungar,
Starka växa örnens ungar;
Fast mot Ring de aktas svaga,
Stor är deras makt mot din."

"Björn, jag ser du tornet hotar,
Men ditt anfall lät jag motar.
Tornet blir dig svårt att taga,
Drar sig i sin sköldborg in."

"Ingeborg i Baldershagen,
Sitter och förgråter dagen,
Kan hon dig till strids ej locka,
Gråterskan med ögon blå?"

"Drottning, Björn, du fåfängt jagar,
Var mig kär från barndomsdagar;
Hon är spelets bästa docka,
Hur det går, hon räddas må."

"Frithiof, vill du icke svara?
Skall din fosterfader fara
Ohörd från din gård, emedan
Ej ett dockspel vill ta slut?" —

Då steg Frithiof upp och lade
Hildings hand i sin och sade:
"Fader, jag har svarat redan,
Du har hört min själs beslut.

Rid att Beles söner lära
Hvad jag sagt; de kränkt min ära,
Inga band vid dem mig fästa,
Aldrig blir jag deras man." —

"Väl, din egen bana vandra,
Ej kan jag din vrede klandra;
Oden styre till det bästa!"
Sade Hilding och försvann.

canto from the second edition of the "Friðþjófssaga" (Reykjavík 1884), pp. 39-41:—

Friðþjófur situr að tafli.

Sat með fræknum fósturbróður
Friðþjófur að tafli hljóður;
Rendir silfri og rauðagulli
Reitir skiptust borði á.

Hilding þá í höllu gengur,
Honum fagnar prúður drengur.
"Sit og tak við fögru fulli,
Fóstri kær, og tafl vort sjá."

"Kveðju ber eg Bela niðja,
Báðir Friðþjóf hjálpar biðja,
Nauðsyn knýr þá liðs að leita,
Landið gjörvalt treystir þér."

Bragning mælti: "Björn, þín gættu,
Boðlung er í stórri hættu,
Bóndinn honum björg má veita,
Bóndinn jafnan skotspónn er."

"Egn ei, fóstri, unga hara,
Óðum þroskast jóðin ara,
Þótt þeir Hringi miðnr megi,
Meiri bræður eru þér."

"Björn, í hættu hrók þú setur,
Hetju valda skal eg betur,
Hans þú framar hefur eigi,
Hrókur inn í skjaldborg fer."

"Ingibjörg í Baldurshaga
Beiskan grætur alla daga,
Getur þig ei ginnt að morði
Grátin mær með augun blá?"

"Drottning, Björn, þú bifar eigi,
Brúður þá frá æskudegi
Þekki' eg, hún er bezt á borði,
Bjarga þeirri víst eg má."

"Skal eg jafnnær frá þér fara,
Friðþjófur, þú vilt ei svara,
Leikur eins og ekki væri,
Óbænheyrðan lætur mig."

Kappinn upp þá stóð að stundu,
Styrka Hilding réttir mundu:
"Svörum, fósturfaðir kæri,
Fullum hef eg sæmdan þig.

Belasonum svör mín tjáðu,
Saklausan mig gylfar smáðu:
Ég er laus við jöfra báða
Ég sit aldrei á þeirra bekk."

"Þig skal ekki þar um saka,
Þú munt sjálfur ráð þér taka;
Alfaðir skal öllu ráða,"
Aldinn kvað, og brautu gekk.

Before the time of Bishop Tegnér the poetical adaptability of the story of Frithiof the bold (hinn frækni), and his fair Ingeborg, had been recognized, and not a few writers had sought to clothe it in a new dress. The earliest of these was the anonymous author of a versified composition in Icelandic, which was written down at least as early as the earlier half of the 16th century, for that is the date of the codex containing it in the great Arnamagnæan collection of Icelandic manuscripts at Copenhagen (cod. 604, c. 4°). It is one of those productions called "rímur" (rhymes)—made up of a single "ríma" (canto, song) or more—which have been composed in such great numbers, in all quarters of the island of Iceland, ever since the close of the classical period of Icelandic literature. These rímur are stories in verse—resembling somewhat in kind, if far inferior in degree, the narrative poems of Walter Scott. Their subjects are drawn from an infinite variety of sources—from the old sagas, from foreign history, from the biblical narratives, from biographies of heroes, from legendary lore, and so on; and until the present generation, they have enjoyed—the best of them at least—unbounded popularity. A few men—like the late Sigurður Breiðfjörð—have made themselves reputations as rímur-writers, but multitudes of these compositions do not rise above mediocrity. They usually comprise, as has already been said, one or more cantos (rímur), each introduced by a so-called *mansöngur* (literally "love-song"), defined in the lexicon of Guðbrand Vigfússon as "lyrical introductions to the epic rhapsodies or ballads (rímur),

for originally these were addressed to the poet's lady love." These earliest "Friðþjófsrímur"—which lack the mansöngur—are in five cantos. A notice of the work was published by Eugen Kölbing,[34] with some extracts, which are compared with portions of the Swedish poem, in order to prove the probability of Tegnér's acquaintance, not only with the ancient saga, but with this more modern metrical version. Dr. Kölbing's essay is of interest, but Jón Þorkelsson, the younger, considers that the Friðþjófsrímur do not rise, in point of literary skill, above the average of similar productions of an equally early date.[35] More recently these old rímur have been printed in full at the end of Ludvig Larsson's edition of the prose Friðþjófs saga, and carefully annotated. The account of the game at *hnefatafl* occurs in canto ii, stanzas 12-22, as follows:—

Fylkir sendi frægan mann
Friðþjóf liðs að kveðja;
Fyrðar segi eg að fundu þann
Fleygi nöðru beðja.

Þrúðan kvöddu þátu runn,
Þryddan handar skafli,
Hvorugan sáu þeir hræra munn
Hersi né Björn að tafli.

Báru þeir hersi bræðra orð
Og báðu hann liðinu safna;
Gat eg hann fyr við falda skorð
Fýsast sér að gamna.

Talaði hann um tafllsins skil
Fyr traustum hringa baldri,
Lita máttu Björn á bil,
Bregðnum við því aldri.

Friðþjóði Hildingur hætti þá
Hörðu af fylkis arfa,
Illum kostum æmti frá,
Annað hyggst að starfa.

Björn frá eg telja tvíkost þann
Tveimur fyrir að tefla,
Hinn kvað mundu að hnefanum lagt,
Helga vil eg ei efla.

Ekki fengu erindi menn
Ómur heldur en þessi,
Kappinn þá fyr konga renn
Með kátleg orðin þessi.

Helgi spurði Hilding að,
Hvað slík orðin þýða,
Greina má eg, kvað garpurinn, það,
Ef grannur vill til þess hlýða.

Þar er hann talaði um tafllsins skil,
Töflu fagra eina,
Hyggja, get eg, þar hersi á bil
Halda í drífu fleina.

En or eg hætti' af hendi þín
Hersi vondum kosti,
Veik þá lítt það vörum sín
Vopnameiðar og brosti.

Björn gat trauðan tvíkost sagt
Tveimur fyrir að stýra,
Hinn kvað mundu að hnefanum lagt,
Hrings nafn oss vill skýra.

Svo máttu fyr seima við
Systar þinnar gæta,
Hygg eg ætla hersis nið
Hitta brúði mæta.[36]

In the present century the history of Frithiof has been twice similarly treated, but subsequently to the publication of Tegner's work. The first is in the "Rímur of Friðþjófi frækna," comprising seven songs, composed in 1837 by Árni Sigurðsson, of Skútar in North Iceland, a little-known rímur-writer. They exist, still inedited, in the manuscript collection of the Icelandic Literary Society (Bókmentafèlag) at Copenhagen, with other rímur by the same hand.[37] They are little likely to see the light, since the libraries

[34] "Beiträge zur vergleichenden geschichte der romantischen poesie und prosa des mittelalters" (Breslau 1876), pp. 207-217, being an essay "Ueber die verschiedenen bearbeitungen der Friðþjófssage."

[35] "Om digtningen på Island i det 15. og 16. århundrede" (Kobenhavn 1888), pp. 148-149.

[36] "Sagan ock rimorna om Friðþjófr hinn frœkni," edited by Ludvig Larsson (Köbenhavn 1893), pp. 101-102.

[37] See "Skýrsla um handritasafn hins íslenzka bókmentafèlags," by Sigurður Jónasson (Kaupmannahöfn 1869), I., p. 117 (8° nº 38, rímnakver).

of Iceland have, on their shelves, accumulated stores of similar productions, which, if they have had any publicity at all, have only obtained it by circulating from hand to hand in written copies.[38] The second work to which allusion has been made has, however, attained to the dignity of print. This is the "Rimur of Friðþjófi frækna," written in 1863 by Lúðvík Blöndal, but only printed in 1884 (Reykjavík). These rímur are in ten songs, in the third of which is to be found the account of Hilding's mission and of the game he witnessed.—Besides these productions in rímur form, the Danish poet, Johan Samsøe (*b.* 1759, *d.* 1796), wrote a romantic tale "Frithiof," published in the first volume of his "Efterladte digteriske Værker" (Kjøbenhavn 1796), pp. 1-32, and subsequently translated, with two other tales from the sagas by Samsøe, into Swedish—"Frithiof, Hildur, och Halfdans Söner. Trenne nordiska Sagor" (Stockholm 1814)—a production which was very likely known to Tegnér, but which appears to contain no mention of

[38] There is little of poetical worth in the "Rímur af Friðþjófi frækna Þorsteinssyni," as it is styled in Árni Sigurðsson's MS. The writer does not make his personages play chess, but holds to the *hnefatafl* of the saga, like his 16th century predecessor, and in his second rima, verses 57-74 (pp. 85-86), thus portrays the game: —

Tefldu branda börfarnir
Björn, Friðþjófur líka,
Hilding vanda heilsan fer
Hversu ástandi glöggast tér.

Bar upp skírast bón um lið,
Birta nam af Hringi,
Að vildi hlírum veita ófrið,
Velgatir með rauglætið.

Styrkja hara hlítur dýr,
Hárs í fara muggu;
Engu svarar tjörgu tír,
Til Bjarnar hann mælti skýr:

Bilinu auða bert í stað,
Bregða ei muntú, vinur!
Vil ótrauður — tekst mér það —
Töflunni rauðu setja að.

Hvort að forðað henni er,
Helst mig girnir vita.
Sendur korða tír enn tér:
Tjá skal orðin Helga þér.

Hlírum fara ef hikar með,
Hét þér ofurkostum.
Þegja bara bragning réð;
Björns kom rara andsvarað:

Tvíkost líta í tafli má,
Tvo frá vegi að leika,
Til hnefans ita eg mun þá;
Eyðir rita mót nam tjá:

Ótrauðari þó mun þér
Þykja tvíkosturinn.
Hilding bara burt nú fer,
Biða svara gagnlaust er.

Fór til baka, birti í stað
Bræðrum Friðþjófs ræðu,
Hvað orðtakið þíði það,
Þeir allspakan fréttu að.

Bilið þíðir: baugaver
Bið á lætur verða
Með ykkur stríða Hrings við her,
Hyggiun skiða njótur tér.

Taflau rauða merkja má
Mæta Ingibjörgu,
Bezt mun auðar beðju gá,
Brodda hauður mælti þá.

Þegar hneita þundi hét
Púngu af ykkar hendi,
Böriun skeyta, bezt svo met,
Björn það heita tvíkost lét.

Hnefinn þýðir Hring eg skil,
Hvað Friðþjófur meinti.
Kóngar lýð sinn týa til
Tirfings stríðan heya bil.

Láta fríða frú — er tjað —
Flytja í Baldurshaga,
Og átta blíðar meyar með,
Margt þær prýðir linnabeð.

Sérhvor Bela sonur kvað:
Síst Friðþjófur vogar,
Gjöra vél í griða stað,
Goðunum vel ei líkar það.

The title of the other modern work, now printed, is: — "Rímur af Friðþjófi frækna, orkt

chess. Another Danish poet, Nicolai Bierfreund Søtoft (*b.* 1790 *d.* 1844), also left a composition—in dramatic form—taken from the same source. It is contained in his "Romantiske Digte" (Kjøbenhavn 1815), pp. 1-180. It is in blank verse and is called "Skjøn Ingeborg og Frithiof, romantisk Skuespil," in five acts. The chess scene occupies a very scanty space, in the second act, and betrays no great familiarity with any game on the part of the author. At the end of it, in response to Hilding's appeal for an answer, Frithiof starts up and exclaims:—"Kast Spillet sammen! spænd mig Brynien paa!"

hefir Lúðvik Blöndal (1863)," (Reykjavik 1881). We copy the portion of the third rima devoted to the game of hnefatafl (Stanzas 27-46, pp. 19-22):—

Bræður vendu við um stund
Vjelaráði, er mest þó skeyta;
Hilding sendu á Friðþjófs fund,
Fylgd hann báðu sjer að veita.

Brynjuhatli beztan gat
Baugafleygi litið inni,
Hann að tafli hnefa sat,
Hýr þó eigi skemmtan sinni.

Hátt svo talar Hildingur:
"Hingað þarfa mætti venda;
Þjer nú valinn Þorsteins bur
Þengilsarfar kveðju senda.

Móti Hringi hara lið
Hollast biðja þig að vita,
Svo ei slíngur flæmi frið,
Fleins í iðju ráður sveita.

Hann þeim skaða hefir tjeð,
Hugarsýki' er vakti stranga,
Ojafnaði' og ofsa með
Á vill riki þeirra ganga."

Kappinn efldi litið lið
Lagði gildum fleinahara,
Björn hann tefldi vaskur við,
Vill ei Hilding neinu svara.

Svo til Bjarnar sagði hinn
Sverðahlynur tignarlegi:
"Bil er þarna, bróðir minn,
Bregða vinur muntu eigi."

Helzt ótrauður hann þá kvað
Hugar meinum var ei skerður:
"Töflu rauðu' eg set að,
Og svo reyni' ef forðað verður."

Sendiboðinn sagði þá:
"Sin þó hafi hver að gæta;
Þetta stoða þig ei má,
Þú munt afar kostum sæta.

Víst ei fjölga vinir hjer
Vöskum dreng þó aukist bagi;
Svo bað Helgi segja þjer."
Svarar engu kappinn frægi.

Hreystilega herkjum þá,
Hjalið Bjarnar úr nam skera:
"Tvo má vega tefla frá,
Tvíkost þarna met eg vera."

Sverða-auðun svarar hinn:
"Setja' að hnefa gaman væri,
Þá ótrauðan tvíkostinn
Tel áu efa, bróðir kæri."

Hildings ærast hugur má,
Harmapínu ljótri seldur;
Annan fær ei úrskurð þá;
Aptur sinar leiðir heldur.

Svörin mildings sonum fljótt
Segja náir hann að vonum;
Heiptin trylldi hugi skjótt
Hlýra þá í vandræðonum.

Spurðu niðings tamir trú
Týrar korða manninn spaka,
Hverja þýðing þjóðin nú
Úr þessum orðum megi taka.—

"Litt eg hræddur lengi sjest"
—laufa yggur svarar kætti,—
"Þar hann ræddi um bilið bezt
Bil á byggja' um lið hans mætti.

Þótt að snauðir værum vjer
Vit og listir Friðþjóf prýða,
Taflan rauða eflaust er
Ykkar systir blóma fríða.

Að þeim stefndi' eg orðum þá
Um sem gáði litt að hirða,
Brátt um hefndir bræðrum frá;
Björn það náði tvíkosta virða.

Mætti knefinn merkja Hring
Mest sem kefur hugi granna
Þann án efa þjóðmæring;
Þetta gefur raun að sanna.

Ykkar mæta systir sizt
Sorgar byrinn ætti' að kanna,
Hennar gætið vel svo víst
Vondra fyrir brögðum manna."

4. — Stray Notes.

Magnús Olafsson's Latin Poem on Chess.

The reverend Magnús Ólafsson, a posthumous son of a poor peasant, was born in Eyjafjarðarsýsla in North Iceland in 1573. His mother, in wandering about one winter night to beg food for her child, perished with cold, and was found, the next morning, with her living son lying upon her breast. He was adopted by the well-to-do Benedikt Halldórsson, who had discovered and rescued him, and who sent him, later on, to be educated at the Cathedral school of Hólar, whence he entered the University of Copenhagen about 1590. He became a man of great learning, compiled what may possibly be looked upon as the first printed Icelandic lexicon ("Specimen lexici Runici," published at Copenhagen in 1650), served for a while as rector of the Hólar school, and died as priest of Laufás, not far from his birth-place, in 1636. He was a constant correspondent, on archæological and philological subjects, of the distinguished Danish antiquary, Ole (Olaus) Worm, to whom he dispatched in 1627 or 1628, a set of Icelandic chessmen, accompanying them by two stanzas in Latin, which we here copy, with the author's notes, as printed in Worm's correspondence,[39] making only some slight orthographic (or typographic) changes in the Icelandic vocables:—

AD D. D. OLAUM WORMIUM

De Skakis ad eum missis.

1.

Latrones ad lites
Ludicras haut rudes,
Cavea clausos levi
Clare vir duc in lares.
Cura campum dari
Cominus se promant,
Getice graves rotet
Gens discolor, enses.

2.

Transtulit in monstri
Thyrso plectenda Cyrce,
Sermone, sic, formas
Satellites, atro,
Postqvam *Vidas* vir castus
Versu cecinit terso,
Forte qvod confertim
Canam læserint anum.

Skákus sive *Skákmaður* in veteri lingva Norveg. idem est, qvod *Latro viaticus* (Schecher etiam Germ. *Latro* dicitur,) item *að Skáka* (infinitiv.) est *Interficere*, nunc abusive utimur, in jurgio convitio aliqvo mordaci alterius famam vulnerare. Hann skákar honum i. e. *convitium dicit*. Qvare mihi *Ludus* non *Scachiæ*, sed *Schachi* appellandus videtur.

Y pro I mutatio litteræ licentia vetus in hoc genere Rhythmi, ut directæ consonantiæ qvam orthographiæ major habeatur ratio.

Talis forma Rhythmi generalissima olim fuit in Lingva Norveg. ut etiam Danica, qvam appellabant *Dróttqvætt*, qu. *vulgo cantabile*; *Drótt* enim *turbam* significat. Hac etiam Heroum facta decantabant.

The peculiarity of this brief poem is that it is an attempt to reproduce in Latin the so-called *dróttkvæði*, an antique Icelandic metrical form in which the very ancient skaldic verses, which appear in so many of the sagas, are

[39] "Olai Wormii et ad eum doctorum virorum epistolæ" (Havniæ 1751), pp. 356-357.

composed—with its peculiar alliteration (the two or three emphatic syllables of each couplet beginning with the same consonant, or with different vowels), and other characteristics. In his first note the writer commits the error—which, as we shall see, later and more pretentious lexicographers have done—of making the Icelandic *skák* cognate with the German *schächer* (robber), and of comparing it to the Latin *latro* of the same meaning—a word entering into the name of the Latin game, *ludus latrunculorum,* which was regarded by the archeologists of an ignorant age as identical with chess. The reply of Worm to this letter, dated 1628, begins thus:—"Literas tuas una cum transmissis Scacchis probe accepi, Vir eruditissime, pro qvibus gratias ut ago debitas, ita occasionem de te vicissim bene merendi oblatam iri unice exoptarem. Literaturam nostram ut et poësin elucidantia qvæ communicasti, exosculor; de iis enim librum conscripsi, ut spero haud inutilem, in qvo suo merito et hæc locum invenient, non sine tui honorifica mentione. Qvod si a te Rythmum *Drotqvet* [Dróttkvætt] antiqva nostra lingva, juxtaque poëseos vestræ leges conscriptum, in hujus commendationem impetrare possem, magno me affectum beneficio existimarem." These are not the only chessmen carved in Iceland which we hear of in connection with the correspondance of Worm; we shall find another poet alluding, twenty years later, to a similar set.—Perhaps it is well to note also the acquaintance of the author with Vida's epical poem, "Scacheïs," as evinced in the second stanza, showing that Iceland, in the 17th century, was not wholly destitute of foreign chess literature.

It is proper to state that these verses by Magnús Ólafsson were first printed by Worm in his "Danica literatura antiqvissima" (Hafniæ 1651, pp. 176-77), in connection with an Icelandic imitation of the old dróttkvæði, also in two stanzas, and also by Magnús Ólafsson. This latter is reproduced both in Runic characters and in the Latin letter. The Latin poem on the chess pieces is there preceded by the following lines from Worm's pen:—"Quo fine Latinum qvoq3 subnectere libuit paradigma generis quidem Dróttqvætt, sed absq3 literarum intricatione et logogrypho, ab eodem autore concinnatum, et ad me, ante annos aliqvot una cum ludi Scachici incunculis affabre in Islandia ex ossibus elaboratis, transmissum." Magnús Ólafsson's "Runic Lexicon," was a dictionary of the oldest Icelandic, chiefly as used in Runic inscriptions, and was, for its time, a remarkable work. The vocabulary was in Runic letters, and the definitions in Latin characters.

Two Witnesses.

The last years of the 16th century, and the last years of the 17th century, present the testimony of two foreign witnesses—of the most intelligent and trustworthy character—in regard to the cultivation of chess in Iceland before and during those periods. The first of these is the learned Norwegian priest—a provost or rural dean—Peder Clausson Friis (1545-1614), the earliest of his modern countrymen to appreciate and translate the historical work of Snorri Sturluson—the monumental history of the Kings of Norway. Friis wrote, as far back as 1580, a tractate "Om Iisland," which, towards the close of the century, he revised and enlarged. It was somewhat altered by Olaus Worm, the Danish scholar, of whom we have just spoken, and incorporated by him with other writings of Friis, published, eighteen years after the author's death, under the title of "Norriges oc Omliggende Øers sandfærdige

Bescriffuelse" (Kjøbenhaffn 1632). The author not only knew Icelandic well, but was in a position to obtain the most accurate information as to the customs of the islanders in his time. The island, in his day, was still looked upon as belonging to Norway, rather than to Denmark. His work, as compiled and edited by Worm, on Norway, her colonies and islands, remained the great authority, until it was superseded by the topographical writings of a still greater man and a still better scholar, the Icelander, Þormóður Torfason —a life-long resident of Norway— better known in the learned world under his Latinized name of Torfæus. Lately, the noted Norwegian philologist and critic, Gustav Storm, has published an admirable edition of the writings of Peder Claussøn Friis, in which is found the treatise "Om Iisland" in the exact form in which the author's final revision left it. From it we translate the following paragraph "Om Skag-Taffll:"—

Concerning the Game of Chess.

They [the Icelanders] have also in their country especially occupied themselves with the practice of the game of chess, which they are said to play in such a masterly and perfect way that they sometimes spend some weeks' time—playing each day—on a single game, before they can bring it to an end by the victory of the one or the other combatant. But of whom they first learned this art I have not read.[40]

The other witness to whom we refer is the author of a book widely read in its day—both in English and French. It was styled "An account of Denmark, as it was in the year 1692," and was published at London in 1694. A second and a third issue followed within a year, but the best edition is the later one of 1738. The author was Robert, Viscount Molesworth (*b.* 1656, *d.* 1725), who, besides having been sent as an extraordinary envoy to Denmark, was a member both of the Irish and the English parliaments, as well as of the English Royal society, an intimate friend of the great Earl Shaftesbury, and both the friend and adviser of Queen Anne and King George the First. He was the author of other productions besides the "Account of Denmark," but that is the book on which his literary reputation chiefly rests. In the first issue of Molesworth's work occurs (pp. 39-40) the following brief paragraph on

Chess in Iceland.

Island[41] and Feroe are miserable Islands in the North Ocean; Corn will not [*will scarce*—edition of 1738] grow in either of them, but they have good

[40] "Samlede skrifter af Peder Claussøn Friis.—Udgivne for den norske historiske forening af Dr. Gustav Storm" (Kristiania 1881), p. 192, the text, in the quaint orthography of the writer's time, reading thus:—

"Om Skag-Taffll."

"De haffuer oc besønderligen der paa Landett befliittet oc øffuet sig paa det Spill Skagetaffll eller Skagspill, huilchet der sigcs at de kunde saa mesterligen oc fuldkommeligen lege, at de kunde nogen Ugers Tijd lege hver Dag paa et Spill, førend de kunde faa det til Ende oc den ene kand vinde den anden offuer. Men huem de først haffue faaet den Konst aff, haffuer ieg iche lest."

[41] In subsequent editions (see that of 1738, p. 26), this is corrected to *Iseland*.

Stocks of Cattle. No Trade is permitted them but with the Danes; the Inhabitants are great Players at Chess. It were worth some curious Man's enquiry how such a studious and difficult Game should get thus far North-ward, and become so generally used.

The historian of chess, Antonius van der Linde—to whose profound and long-continued labors in a field not easily tilled the world is greatly indebted—reprints, from the French translation of Molesworth's book, the passage we have here cited, and endeavors to riddle it with his sharp critical shots.[42] As those who have perused his stupendous "Geschichte des Schachspiels," and his series of articles on "Skak paa Island" in the "Dansk Skaktidende," will have had occasion to observe, Dr. v. d. Linde's knowledge of Iceland and of Icelandic is too limited to enable him to treat Icelandic chess with the extraordinary accuracy and logical judgment evinced in his investigations into other domains. He does not seem to have seen Molesworth's original (English) text, but the French version is satisfactorily exact. He tries, first of all, to depreciate Molesworth's testimony in general, by saying (in allusion to the writer's use of the form "Feroe") that he evidently regards "Iceland and Feroe" as two islands ("die der verfasser für zwei inseln zu halten scheint!") If Dr. v. d. Linde had looked a little more closely into the history of geography, he would have found that the English—and the French as well—have never been able to settle on a proper way of adapting to their own tongue the name of the island group which the Danes now call "Færøer," but of which the official Danish orthography, in Molesworth's time, was "Færøe" (without the final *r*). The word is, of course, a corruption of the Icelandic "Færeyjar" (*i. e.* sheep islands), and terminates with the Danish plural form (*ø* = island, *øer* = islands), the singular of which, descended from the Icelandic, remains in the final syllable of our place-names, "Jersey," "Guernsey," "Anglesea"—not to mention the appellations of other islands. Some English writers have tried to solve the difficulty by getting as near the Danish form as our alphabet will permit, and have written "Feroe" (like Viscount Molesworth), thereby running the risk of being charged by some too wise critics (like Dr. v. d. Linde) with considering the group as a single island. Others have boldly added the English plural ending, and written "Faroes" (or "Feroes"), thereby running the risk of being charged with committing a grammatical solecism in the use of a double plural. The ignorance here is thus Dr. v. d. Linde's, rather than Viscount Molesworth's. The former next denies the truth of the latter's immediately following assertion, in regard to the good stock of cattle in Iceland, and states that the island has no cattle ("auf Island werden im gegentheil nur schafe und kleine pferde gehalten"), while by a very little research—the briefest enquiry at the Danish statistical bureau, for instance—he could have ascertained that on this point, too, Molesworth was much better informed than himself. The fact is that in 1703—a decade after Molesworth wrote—the cattle of Iceland numbered 35,860 head—more than one to every two inhabitants. He passes by the English writer's succeeding statement, namely that the Icelanders are allowed to have commercial dealings only with the Danes, which was then, and for a century

[42] "Quellenstudien zur geschichte des schachspiels von Dr. A. v. d. Linde" (Berlin 1881), pp. 311-312.

and a half afterwards, perfectly true. Finally, in a foot-note, he falls foul of the information given by Molesworth in regard to Icelandic chessplaying, saying that his remark merely shows what was thought at Copenhagen in 1692 about chess in Iceland. But at any rate it does show that, which counts for not a little, for in the 17th century, as both before and since, Copenhagen was the one European capital in which trustworthy accounts about Iceland and its customs were to be had. Then, as now, every year witnessed the arrival of Icelanders in Copenhagen, and the departure of Danes—merchants and officials—for Iceland; then, as now, there was always a considerable colony of Icelanders—numbering in this year of 1900 some seven hundred souls—resident in the Danish metropolis; then, as now, there was always a body of intelligent young Icelanders—the number this year is sixty or more—from all parts of their native land, pursuing their studies at the university of Copenhagen. What was thought about chess in Iceland at Copenhagen in 1692 would, therefore, be apt to be pretty near the truth. [43]

The Chess Lays of Stefán Ólafsson.

Next to Hallgrímur Pètursson, the almost inspired writer of the "Fifty Passion Hymns," the most prominent Icelandic poet of the 17th century was undoubtedly Stefán Ólafsson, born somewhere about 1620 and dead somewhere about 1688. The son of a country priest, he had half a score of brothers and sisters, and, a country priest himself, he became the parent of nearly as many children. Late in life (1671), he was made a rural dean. It is a fact worthy of mention that directly from one of his daughters were descended the two most noteworthy poets of the island during the first half of this century. [44] Like the priest, Hallgrímur Pètursson, he was also a hymnologist, for besides composing original hymns he rendered into Icelandic many of those of the famous Danish hymn-writer, Bishop Thomas Kingo. [45] He possessed a layman's wit as well, and an abundant measure of wanton humour. Many are his still-remembered quips and epigrams and quaint and curious conceits. He was, moreover, learned in ancient lore, and a good Latinist, both in verse and prose. But what we have to note in these pages is his three chess poemettes (if we may use the word), each of a single eight-line stanza—models of compactness, of hidden fancies, of sonant alliteration, of correct metrical form—indeed, in this last characteristic, they show some of the weaknesses of his age, and of the age of the rímur-writers, with whom sense had sometimes to give way to sound or rhyme. About the authorship of the third piece there is some dispute, though it is ascribed to his pen in the two oldest MSS. We first present the Icelandic text of the three as it is given by his latest editor, Dr. Jón Þorkelsson the younger, whose knowledge of the post-reformation verse of Iceland is unequalled. His edition is published by the Icelandic Literary Society. [46]

[43] It may perhaps be considered, in its way, a noticeable comment on Dr. v. d. Linde's disbelief in the Icelanders' fondness for chess that an Icelander, Mr. Magnús Smith, residing at Winnipeg, Manitoba, is now the foremost chess-player of Canada, having won the championship of English North America last summer (1899).

[44] Bjarni Thorarensen (1786-1841) and Jónas Hallgrimsson (1807-1845).

[45] Many of the hymns of this bishop of the Danish island of Fyen (1634-1703) are still kept in the hymn-book of the Danish church.

[46] "Stefán Ólafsson. Kvæði" (2 vols. Kaupmannahöfn 1885-86), II., pp. 47-50.

Taflvísur.

I.

Til Þorsteins Magnússonar, er skáldið misti mann í skák.

Mæli eg um og mæli eg á
Að menn hans Steina falli í strá,
Honum hrífi glettan grá,
Gefi í einu tvo og þrjá,
Gamla hrapi fjörinu frá,
Fækki um reita peðin smá,
Falli þanninn fræðaskrá,
Fái hann mátin lág og há.

II.

Jón leikur skár skák,
Skók hann af mér hvern hrók,
Biskupinn fékk rórask,
Riddarinn og peðsnidd,
Á gömlu er komið gangsvingl,
Gáði hún ekki að ná bráð,
Kongurinn með forfang
Fékk mátið ollát.

III.

Fallega spillir frillan skollans öllu,
Frúin sú, sem þú hefur nú að snúa,
Heiman læmist hamin í slæmu skrumi,
Hrók óklókan krókótt tók úr flóka,
Riddarinn staddur, reiddur, leiddur, hræddur
Reiður veður með ógeð að peði,
Biskups háskinn blöskrar nízkum húska,
Við bekkinn gekk, svo hrekkinn þekkir ekki.

The following literal English prose translations, with their brief comment, are the work of an Icelandic hand,[47] and reproduce with all possible clearness the meaning of the originals:—

Chess Lays.

I.

To Þorsteinn Magnússon,[48] *when the poet lost a piece at chess.*

My malediction I utter—May Steini's men fall in heaps! May my fearful incantations bewitch him so that peril shall beset two or three of his pieces

[47] Both the rendering of the stanzas and the comment have been obligingly made in English by my friend, Mr. Sigfús Blöndal, whose great familiarity with his own and other modern literatures is well known.

[48] It is possible that the adversary at chess, to whom these lines are addressed, is that Þorsteinn Magnússon (*d.* 1656), chief official (sýslumaður) of Skaptafellssýsla, the county next to that in which the poet dwelt, who was the author of a description of the eruption of the volcano Katla, which took place in 1625, and of other works still in MS. Or was he the Þorsteinn Magnússon, who, in 1703, wrote the "Rimur af Hrólfi Gautrekssyni" (preserved among the Arna-Magnæan treasures)? But the latter's home was far from that of Dean Stefán. Nothing is known, or surmised, of the poet's other opponent at chess, alluded to as "Jón" in the second piece.

at once! May the Old One[49] lose her life! May the wee pawns grow fewer and fewer on the squares, and may he be mated both with the low and high mates!

II.

John is the better man at chess; he has wrested from me each rook; the quiet of my bishop, my knight and my pawns is ruthlessly broken; the Old One is moving about aimlessly, not seeing her prey when within reach; my king is overmastered and completely checkmated.

III.

She is spoiling all beautifully, that damned jade, your queen, whom you are now moving; she steals away from her house, clever in her coarse boastfulness, neatly picking the stupid rook from the throng. The knight, on hand, kept ready for combat, well guided, falls afeard despite his own wrath, and dares only attack sullenly a puny pawn, while the cowardly rook, fearful of the bishop's menace, keeps to his border line and thus evades the stratagems of the enemy.

Comment.

The text of the three stanzas is, in some places, very difficult of comprehension, and possibly corrupted. The following notes may perhaps be of some use to the student: —

I.

mœli eg um og mœli eg á. — Here two constructions are confounded: *mœla um* and *leggja á*, the meaning of both these phrases being "to pronounce and impose a magic spell;" the use of *mœla á* can only thus be accounted for, or defended. This sort of metaphorical confusion occurs sometimes in Icelandic, though hardly as frequently as in the classical literatures.

falli í strá, literally "fall in the straw;" compare *strá-drepa*, "kill a great number."

grá "gray," but used here in the same sense as in *grátt gaman*, "dangerous," "dreadful." A kindred use is to be seen in *Valgarðr enn grá*, "the perfidious" (in the Njála), and in the compound *grályndur*, "malicious."

gefi í einu, "give [to danger] at one and the same time." This is the only rational interpretation, as two or three men cannot be *given up* [that is, by capture, to the adversary] at one and the same move, but they can be simultaneously endangered or menaced.

fræðaskrá is simply "song," but here in the sense of "incantation."

mátin lág og há alludes to the singular Icelandic custom, now obsolete, of arranging the men, or closing a game, in such a way that there might be a sequence of mates—the more numerous the better. The multitudinously mated player was hindered meanwhile from moving by the circumstance that every succeeding move of his adversary was an additional checkmate. The first three mates effected, uninterruptedly, in this manner were known as the "low checkmates", *lág mát*; if more followed they were styled the "high checkmates," *há mát*. See the essay on chess by Ólafur Davíðsson

[49] By the title of the "Old One" the poet alludes to the chess-queen. This epithet, in mediæval chess, was sometimes applied to the bishop.

in his "Gátur, þulur og skemtanir," wherein the names of the different checkmates are enumerated—reprinted as the second appendix to this volume.

II.

skók, "shook" "wriggled," "wrested."

forfang, can have but one meaning here, namely, that the king was overpowered, but its etymology is doubtful. Mr. Eiríkur Magnússon, of Cambridge, points out to me that it may be the Danish *forfang* (Swedish, *förfång*); I believe he is right, and that it can possibly be used as Icelandic, in which case it is likely that it is employed in the sense of *eiga fullt i fangi*, or something to that effect—the meaning being nearly identical.

oflát. Mr. Eiríkur Magnússon proposes the ingenious textual emendation *óflátt*, which, from a graphical point of view, seems probable; *óflátt*, "without treachery," that is "genuinely," "thoroughly", would yield an excellent interpretation. If, however, we read *oflát*, the signification must be something like "shamefully or proudly treated by the adversary," (compare *oflátungr*); but as *oflát* can hardly be brought into grammatical relation with any of the words in its vicinity, I feel convinced that something is at fault with the text—unless there be an unpardonable introduction, by the poet, of a meaningless word simply to furnish a rhyme, in accordance with a deplorably frequent usage of the period.

III.

frillan skollans, literally "the devil's concubine;" but, in cursing, the genitive form of the devil's numerous names is only used appositionally, so that the meaning would be "the damned harlot."

hamin í, compare *hemja* ("restrain"), *óhemja*, *hamr*, here with the sense of "skilled in." I suspect that Stefán Ólafsson wanted to say *tamin*, "educated in," but as this was impossible on account of the alliteration, which demanded a word beginning with *h*, he substituted *hamin* in the sense of the other vocable. Such unwarrantable substitutions are especially common in the rímur.

flóki must here mean "the press or thronging of the chessmen."

biskups háskinn, here the "danger arising from the bishop," not the "bishop's danger." Analogies are numerous in the poetry of the time.

niskum húska, most probably the rook is meant, as the word hrókur is often used in a bad sense, like *húski*, and indicates sometimes a proud, sometimes a corrupt person, the latter especially in the compound *kvenna-hrókur*.

við bekkinn can only mean that the rook kept himself close to the border of the chess-board—*bekkr*=*rönd*.

hrekkinn þekkir ekki, that is "does not know the dodge, artifice, trick," "evades the stratagem or attack of the bishop."[50]

On account of its remarkable use of identical vocal sounds—carried as it is to an extreme—the third piece is often committed to memory by young

[50] The third of these pieces, as we have stated, has other claimaints to its authorship. One MS attributes it to Guðmundur Bergþórsson (1655-1705), a prolific rímur-writer; and there is a story which ascribes it to Ragnheiður Brynjólfsdóttir, the unfortunate daughter of the well-known and erudite Brynjólfur Sveinsson, bishop of Skálholt. An allusion to this tale is made by Mr. Ólafur Davíðsson, in the article which we print later on.

Icelanders as an exercise in phonology, or as a curiosity of composition. To understand its extraordinary structure it is necessary to examine each line separately. Thus the first line is marked by a constant repetition of the double liquids *ll* (a combination having the pronunciation in Icelandic of *dl*); they form the medial consonants of each word. In the second line, the emphasis falls persistently on the long vowel *ú* (with the pronunciation of the English *oo* in *tool*), which occurs five times. In line three, the middle consonant of all the vocables but one is *m*, preceded and followed by vowels. The fourth line presents the syllable *ók*—all long—in five recurrences. Line five is that producing the most notable sonant effect, with five instances of medial *dd*. Line six, in each of its five words, has the dental *ð* (the English *th* in *this*). The seventh and eighth lines, the former with its recurrence of medial *sk*, and the latter with its harsh double consonants *kk*, are nearly as effective to the ear as the fifth. The sound of it all, when well read, is strikingly strange—being a kind of rattling jingle. Neither Homer, nor any other classic author, has produced anything quite like these cadences, while the only resemblances to them in English are found perhaps in "The Bells" of Poe. But alliterative oddities, somewhat similar, are not infrequent in the exuberant poesy of Iceland. There is a long lay called "Háttalykill rímna" by a 16th century bard, Hallur Magnússon, in which the metres employed by the rímur-poets are enumerated, among them being one entitled "dýri háttur," of which the author gives the following example[51]:—

Stuttur, steyttur, fluttur, fleyttr
Fljótt er breyttur, skjótt hèr þreyttr
Þáttur skreyttur, háttur hreyttr
Hætti neittur, mætti reittr.

There is also a jingle by a modern rhymster, Olafur Gunnlaugsson Briem, portraying a ride on a stumbling pony:—

Jeg hlaut að stautast blauta braut,
Bykkjan skrykkjótt nokkuð gekk;
Hún þaut, hún hnaut; jeg hraut í laut,
Og hnykk með rykk á skrokkinn fjekk.

Of real nonsense-verses there are no end—such as the stanzas of the priest, Ögmundur Sigurðsson, known as the "Sýni rímnaskáldskapar," satirizing the extravagancies of the rímur-writers, of which we cite only the first three[52]:—

Kjalars læt, jeg klunkara hlunkara dunkinn
Arka úr kjarkars orða höll
Ambara vambara fram á völl.

Hlumpara stumpara hlampara trampara stampi
Liðrings viðrings legg eg út ár
Leiðólfs hleiðólfs haddaðar brár.

Mansönga föngin glymjara göngin gagara jaga,
Út um þröngin druslara draga
Drakons spöngin laga slaga.

As to the metre—strictly so-called—of the little lyric in question there seems to be no term exactly defining it, but possibly one might speak of it as a sort

[51] "Om digtningen på Island." p. 365.
[52] "Snót" (Reykjavík 1865), pp. 378-79.

of "dróttkvæða hrynjandi—the precipitating, dropping, or running sort, of dróttkvæða háttr", alluded to by Eirikur Magnússon (of Cambridge) in the interesting introduction to his rendering of the mediæval religious poem, "Lilja," (London 1870).[53]

The following feeble attempt at a quasi-metrical paraphrase will possibly give the English reader an idea, though a faint one, of these Icelandic verses. No effort has been made to adhere, with any exactitude, to the laws which govern the Icelandic alliterative system. The reproduction in another tongue of the complicated structure of Icelandic poetry—its hidden imagery and symbolic verbal paraphrases (*kenningar*), its combinations of rhyme and alliteration, its assonances and resonances of every sort, its great variety of metres—is impossible unless some of its striking features be omitted. Yet, with all its complex features, Icelandic poetry can hardly be called—at least in the most modern examples—artificial. Alliteration, so difficult in the other Germanic languages, which are now spoken, has become natural to the Icelandic; and in no land is improvisation so common, or in appearence so facile—not even in Italy, in which, as a foreigner expressed it, there is no need of "an art of writing poetry," but only of "an art of not writing poetry." But here are the versions which do such scant justice to their originals:—

I.

I adjure thee, fell fate,
  That thou fall foul of Steinn!
That thou try all thy treachery
  To trip up his troops!
That his queen thou make quail,
  And his pawns quit their squares,
Till his king be well-muzzled
  By a murderous mate!

II.

From the chess-field John chases
  My champions, the rooks;
My knights and my bishops are badgered;
  My pawns are battered and bound;
My Old Woman has wandered astray—
  Witless and wild are her ways—
And, majestic monarch no more—
  A mate has murdered her spouse.

III.

Your Queen's a doubly damnéd jade;
  She's dished my dastard mitred dolt,
And stealthy, sternly stalking, striding
  To stem the stormy stir and stress,
She's made my nobby knight afeared
  To nab a nimble ninny pawn,
And kept my wretched rook a-reeling
  Rolling along the regal rank.

Stefán Olafsson, like Magnús Olafsson, of whom we have only just been treating, was a correspondent of the erudite Olaus Worm. In the latter's published correspondance, already cited, there is a letter from the Icelandic

[53] "Lilja" (The Lily), edited and translated by Eirikur Magnússon, p. xxxiv.

poet dated from his parish, Kyrkjubær, September 15, 1648, in which the closing lines mention the transmission of a snuff-box carved out of a whale's tooth, and state that the young artisan who wrought it also made pretty chessmen of the same material, and at a moderate price:—"His adjungo pyxidem, a quodam juvene Islando ex dente balænæ formatam, qua nicotianam pulverizatam sternutamentis evocandis osservari voluit. Hic juvenis pleraque artificiosa, quæ oculis usurpat, imitatur, ipse sibi magister; in primis vero latrunculos scacchidis affabre format et mediocri pretio vendit." Thus we have accounts, by two contemporary parish priests of Iceland, of the manufacture by natives of sets of chessmen—two centuries and a half ago—which does not look as if the Icelanders had so little fondness for the game as Dr. Van der Linde would have us believe.

Among the Lexicographers.

It is only by turning over the many volumes devoted to the elucidation of the extensive vocabulary of the Icelandic tongue, in all its periods of development, that we shall be able to acquire a definite idea of the words and phrases connected with the terminology of chess. In the course of our researches we shall doubtless come across some interesting facts and some amusing fallacies, and we shall especially learn how impossible it is to make dictionaries without a combination of philology and technology—without the assistance in every art and science, in every branch of human action, of a technical specialist, familiar with the exact significations and shades of meaning of all the terms used in the field in which he labors. The study of philology, and in particular of its department of etymology, shows how difficult is the task of delving truth out of the deep obscurity which envelopes the early history of human speech, and teaches us how long and persistent is the life of an error, however often and forcibly it may be refuted. We have already observed that the studious priest, Magnús Ólafsson, working in his distant and lonely Icelandic parish, produced, in his "Specimen Lexici Runici," the first attempt at any sort of an Icelandic dictionary which got itself printed, and we have learned what he knew about the philology of chess. He was evidently an admirer and practitioner of the game, but from its scope he could not well introduce any of its terms into his Runic glossary; yet we have been able to note, through another product of his pen, that he regarded the name of the game (*skák*) as akin to the German *schächer*, signifying "robber"—in the making of which unlucky guess he does not stand alone, as we shall find when we come to examine the work of the latest Icelandic lexicographers.

But the earliest Icelandic dictionary of a more general character was that of Guðmundur Andrèsson (Gudmundus Andreæ. *d.* 1654), whose "Lexicon Islandicum" appeared at Copenhagen in 1683—of course with notable omissions and with some errors, especially of arrangement. He interprets the word *skák*, by the Latin "ludus latrunculorum," and derives it from a Hebrew verb—which he quotes—signifying "commovere, ludere etc." Hebrew, it will be remembered, was the favorite tongue of etymologists (and the tower of Babel their great castle, or storehouse, of primitive sources) in the time when that famous chess-writer, Sir William Jones, had not yet introduced Sanskrit to the erudite world of Europe. The compiler of the "Lexicon Islandicum" proceeds to explain one of the technical meanings of *skák* (in its sense of check) as "ejusdem ludi in regem irruptio, unde *at skáka*, id est

insultare regulo, duci latronum, vulgo pro *scommate*," the final word being intended for *skákmát* (little used in Icelandic, the regular form being *skák og mát*), or for the Danish *skakmat*. *Mát* he defines:—"Nex, mors: sic vocant in ludo latrunculorum extremum reguli interitum, ceu cædem ejus, cum è medio tollitur," and hints that he does not know its origin unless it be from another Hebrew vocable, the meaning of which is "death" (*mors*). Of the chessmen, he treats only *hrókur*, "longurio, latro, latrunculorum satelles, elephantes"—the last word evincing some little reading in chess history, and *peð*, "pedites in ludo latrunculorum," saying that it also means "boy," quoting a diminutive, *peðlingur*, παις—this final word, for etymology's sake perhaps. *Peðlingur*, we may remark, is not a common form. He has *reitur*, "locus quadrangulus in ludu latrunculorum." *Tafl* he dwells on at some length, explaining it as "ludus talis aleâ vel latrunculis structus: generaliter enim hæc vox ista omnia significat: qvim et ipsa simulacra, qvis luditur"—about as good and as comprehensive a definition as can be found in far later works. It is followed by *tafla*, "orbiculi aleæ" and *taflborð*, "fritellus," whence, he says, the general verb *tefla*, "talis, aleâ vel latrunculis ludere"; and then he presents us with another verb not found, we believe, elsewhere, *at punga taflið*, "colligere et claudere simulacra lusoria"—the phrase being, he tells us, an "adagium pro jactura." This word for "empouch," or replacing men, after a game, in their pouch, is significant, as we may understand, when we hear, in the sagas, of the noun *pungur*. Finally the author cites *taflmaðr mikill*, "vocatur qvi gnarus est ludere ita." These items about the Eastern game are few, but how many more relating to chess are to be found in any dictionary, issued anywhere, before the end of the 17th century, and particularly in one of not more than 269 not very large quarto pages? *Hnefatafl*, occurring so frequently in later works, is not given in any of its various orthographical forms.

Much larger and much more pretentious is the "Lexicon Scandicum" of the Swede, Olaus Verelius, which saw the light eight years later (1691) at Upsala. But it yields comparatively less of matter having reference to chess. The definitions are in both Latin and Swedish—which latter we cite in parentheses. There is first *skáktafl* as the name of the game (with a citation of the Ólafs saga helga), "ludus latrunculorum" (skakspel), followed by the verb *skacka* [sic], "stratagematibus in ludo isto uti" (skaka), the remainder of the rubric, relating by error to quite another verb, *skakka*. Under *tafl* (p. 252) and most of its derivatives, the explanatory words are generally chess terms, as *tafl*, "latrunculi" (skaktaflor), *taflborð*, *taflbrögð*, "viles et stratagemata in lusu latrunculorum" (list och konst att spela skack i bräde), *taflspeki*, *taflfé*. There are several references to old authors, especially to what is called the "Orms Snorrasons Book," an ancient codex which contained a number of "Suðurlanda sögur" like the Mágus saga.[54] At the end of the *taflfé* rubric, the author, singularly enough, puts the word *mát* (written

[54] This important MS, one of the many Icelandic book-rarities which reached Sweden in the 17th century through the Icelander, Jón Rugman, was subsequently lost because several of the Swedish scholars of that time, men like Verelius, the elder Rudbeck, Loccenius and others—or their heirs—were unable to make up their minds to render Cæsar's things unto Cæsar by returning the book-treasures which they had borrowed from public collections. See that most interesting and valuable publication, "Fornnordisk-Isländsk litteratur i Sverige, I." (Stockholm 1897) by Vilhelm Gödel, of which, unfortunately for the learned world, the second part has not yet appeared.

matt), and gives the compounds, *rogsmatt* (*i. e.* hróksmåt), *peðmåt*, *fretstertumåt*, with some passages, and derives the term from "Ital. *matto*." Removed, in the printer's make-up, from the compounds of *måt*, and probably applying to the last of them, is the definition "stolidus," and the quotation *hrakligastur i taflinu*. It is in Verelius that the term *fretstertumåt*, of which we shall hear too frequently hereafter, is first noted. Besides the above citation, he has a separate rubric for it (p. 81), defining it:—"Est terminus et locutio ludentium latrunculis," (Kallas, när den bonden som står mitt mot [*sic*] kongen i skaktaflet, kommer honom så när, at han skakar, eller stänger honom, och fijs för nasan på honum)—followed by a citation from the Mágus saga referring to the third of the mates given by Hirtungur to the King. He gives the derivation of the first member of the word from the infinitive *freta*. His explanation in Swedish is the most detailed, as well as the oldest in the dictionaries, and amounts to "a mate by the adverse king's own pawn." Of the chess figures he has only (p. 197) *peðmaður*, "pumilio," and *peð*, "latrunculus lusorius," adding *peðmåt*, which he interprets as "exprobatio imperitiæ in collocandis et promovendis latrunculis." *Hrókur* is absent from its alphabetical place, but on page 82 there is a reference to another vocabulary "in voce Rocco, turricula in latrunculis"—there being perhaps an incomprehensible omission of some kind. The work of Verelius is a solidly-printed folio of more than 300 pages, and, though the vocabulary displays a lack of care and orderly arrangement, the compilation is a credit to the scholarship of that day—but it is most probably, to a considerable extent, the work of Icelanders then resident in Sweden.[55]

[55] Following the story of Old-Northern philology, from its beginning down to our own day, it is impossible not to feel astonishment at the number of learned labourers which a community so small as the population of Iceland, has produced. As in the ancient days, when the sagaman recounted his tales and the skald recited his lays, nearly all the literary life of the North was hers—while the other greater and richer lands of Scandinavia were well nigh barren—so, in modern times, she has been the chief interpreter of her own creations, which embody the history, the mythology, the laws of the early Gothic world. It is true that the island commonwealth possessed—to begin with—a splendid heritage. All the lore of the primeval ages was hers. Her sons still spoke the language of those days in which there were giants; to them the larger utterances of the gods were still household voices; even the whispers which startled nature, at the dawn of our civilization, they could yet repeat. The key of the treasures concealed by the mysterious runes—powerful as the seal of Salomon against the endeavors of other hands—was likewise in their possession. All the deities of the Odinic theology found their final refuge on Iceland's shores. Only among her icy mountains lingered, at last, the faint echoes of the songs of the heroes who battled, and battling, chanted, in the twilight of our race. On every Tuesday, and Wednesday, and Thursday, and Friday, the morning breezes brought to her sons—and are bringing them yet—messages from the halls of Valhalla—messages which would be meaningless, even if they were not deaf to them, in the ears of the degenerate children of the Goth and the Saxon. The sturdy republic which the offspring of kings and vikings had built up amid the snow of glaciers and the fire of volcanoes, continued to be governed by the archaic codes established by the Moses and Solons of the old Teutonic times. To these insular Northmen, too, were alone known the stories of the years when their ships sailed over the Northern waters of the Atlantic to another world in the west—centuries before the keel of the Italian Columbus ploughed a way through its Southern waters. The empires of the South could see the setting sun in all its glory, but only Iceland knew of the lands of the Hesperides beyond, or could guess what that sunset glory foretold. They felt, too, the burden of the past, and the honours and duties of long descent, for, in tradition at first, in inscribed tables afterwards, they could trace back from son to sire, from sire to grandsire, and from grandsire to the remotest progenitor, the story of each household. These genealogies went back far beyond the Iceland-ward wanderings of their people, while the narratives of the wanderings themselves had been transmitted with the detail of a diarist. The families that migrated in the 5th and 6th cen-

A long interval separates Olaus Verelius from the scholarly Icelander, Björn Halldórsson, whose "Lexicon Islandico-Latino-Danicorum," edited by Rasmus Kristian Rask, was published at Copenhagen in 1814. Feeble as the work is, when compared with those which have superseded it, it was, in its day, a great boon to students of the ancient Northern literature—to the cultivation of which it gave a marked impulse. Rask was assisted, in his editorship, by several Icelanders then studying in Copenhagen; Danish definitions were added to the Latin ones of Björn Halldórsson, and are here, as usual, cited in parentheses, while Icelandic terms are in Italics. The name of the game, *skák*, is explained as "ludus latrunculorum" (the better Latin-

turies from the southern borders of the North Sea, to the coast of Kent, like those that in the 17th century, crossed the broader seas that separated Old England from New England, took little or no pains to hand down to posterity the annals of their progress; but the Icelanders, whenever they chose, could walk again in the recorded footsteps of their fathers, who, in the 9th and 10th centuries had left the fjords of Norway and the islands of Scotland, to take possession of the green valleys that open to the ocean along the shores of their far-northern home. And as each of those valleys began to make its history, every incident and accident, every gest and scene, was remembered and transmitted and described again and again to the descendants of the settlers unto the latest generation. But all this was not true of the home-land merely. Icelandic bards and story-tellers, champions and ramblers, brought back from foreign courts and camps accounts of the life of the outer world—the doings of kings and warriors, of courtiers and prelates, of soldiers and peasants—and told them afresh to their children and their children's children. Then it happened, in the course of time, as was natural, that Iceland not only kept the old tongue, but learned to wield the new pen as well—the new pen that Christianity brought with it into the North. In the houses of her chiefs, in the cabins of her yeomen, in the cloisters of her priests, hundreds of scribes, through many lifetimes, wrote down the sound and the sense of the words that were vanishing, and the tales of the deeds that were fading. But for their zeal—writing mostly under the pale sun and during the brief sunshine of winter—the most powerful peoples of the present worlds would long ago have lost, past recall, the knowledge of what their far-away forefathers thought and wrought; of how they lived and laboured; of whom they prayed to, and of what they fought for. Thus each great man's house, in the lapse of years—for there were seekers after rarities in those days, too—became a library rich in lettered wealth elsewhere unattainable—in the varied learning of the North-Teutonic bard and pilgrim and chronicler and rhymer and romancer. There could be read such legends of Germanic heroes as were not to be found in other Germanic lands; such narratives of the Scandinavian kings as no other Scandinavian region possessed; such lives of English saints and Scottish island jarls as Britain knew not of. But in the end the lore-loving little land was fated to lose much of this well-earned wealth and glory. The manuscripts on vellum and paper—so many that the number of them still extant seems incredible—were carried away—as Rome despoiled Greece of her marbles, as Napoleon despoiled Italy of her canvasses—to enrich and make famous the libraries of foreign lands, not a few of them perishing in transit by accidents of fire and flood. But it turned out that to the foreign despoilers the manuscripts were dumb. Their words were voiceless except to those who wrote them. They were as unintelligible as were the hieroglyphs carved on the obelisks of Egypt to the Romans who pulled them down on the banks of the Nile to set them up again on the banks of the Tiber. Thus the children of Iceland had again to rescue from oblivion the records of our ancestral wisdom. They had to interpret to the duller generations of the old family the words their ancestors had formerly committed to stone and parchment, to reconstruct the monuments and muniments, of which their new owners proved to be unworthy keepers. It is to Icelanders that we owe the first grammars of the primitive speech, published at Copenhagen and Oxford. It is they who have been the compilers of dictionaries, and the commentators of the classic writings. But even before the outflow of manuscripts had fairly begun, the renaissance of Icelandic philology had already dawned—in the 16th century and in Iceland itself. The leading figure of the new period was Arngrimur the learned—as he was styled, both at home and abroad—Arngrimur Jónsson (Jonas) Vidalin—the ancestor of a vigorous and erudite race—whose many works were made public partly by the Icelandic, partly by the foreign press. In the first continental school of Old-Northern linguistic research—which flourished in Sweden during the 17th century—the names which accompany the

ism, "ludus scaccorum," has not, we see, even yet reached the Icelandic philologists), and is succeeded by the compounds, *skákborð*, *skákmenn* (the plural only), "latrunculi," (brikker i skakspil); and by the verb, *skáka*, under which several phrases are cited: *skák þèr*, with a figurative meaning, "tua res agitur" (et overmods udtryk; skal betyde: nu er du i knibe, eller og: nu er min tilstand bedre en din)—with no attempt at an elucidation of the technical signification; *skáka i hróksvaldi*, "superbire patrocinio potentioris" (vise sig overmodig under en mægtigeres beskyttelse)—a phrase which we shall comment upon later; and *at rjúfa skák*, "frangere mandram" (befri kongen for skak i skakspil)—this last given as a real technical phrase, "to

titles of the learned folios were the names of the scholars of Upsala and Stockholm, but the labour between the covers was to a large extent that of the line of Icelandic "translators," as they were styled, which from Jón Rugman was carried on through the brothers, Guðmundur and Helgi Ólafsson. They had been summoned to Sweden by the College of Antiquities (Antiquitets-Collegium) first in the hope of obtaining more spoil from Iceland, and secondly to enable the learned editors to read the vellums they had already garnered. It is as amusing, as it is sad, to read of the rivalry between Denmark and Sweden in exploiting the strange mines that had been opened in the distant islet, to which so little heed had been paid in the preceding centuries. Secret agents—Icelanders—were sent home by Sweden, and the harvest gathered was landed on her coast, while the boat and agent went on to Copenhagen. It was a singular commerce. What we have said of the works of the Swedish school is equally true of those of the Danish, which, in those days, was also the Norwegian. It is easy to note, for instance, how many of Ole Worm's publications in the 17th century were the result of Icelandic knowledge and toil—his own letters indicate this—and the books edited by Stephanius and Resenius could hardly have been issued without help from the same source. Arngrimur Jónsson was followed by many of his countrymen—the bishops Þorlákur Skúlason, Brynjólfur Sveinsson (the "discoverer of the Edda") and Þórður Þorlákssón, the diligent annalist, Björn Jónsson (á Skarðsá), and, above all, by the illustrious Þormóður Torfason (Torfæus), the foremost Northern scholar of his day—these were the real workers in the linguistic hive. To some others of no less merit, the lexicologists Magnús Ólafsson and Guðmundur Andrèsson, and the grammarian Runólfur Jónsson, we have already alluded. Take away from Danish Old-Northern letters in the next century the names of Torfæus—who lived through its first two decades—Árni Magnússon and Jón Eiriksson, not to mention those of the bishop, Finnur Jónsson, whose monumental "Historia ecclesiastica" (4 vols. 4° Havniæ 1772-78) covered the Catholic period of the island, during much of which the classic spirit was still alive; of the lexicographer, Björn Halldórsson; of the juridical archæologist, Páll Vidalín; and of the commentator, Grímur Jónsson Thorkelín—take away these names, and of how high a quality is the foreign residuum? Take away, again, the names of Finnur Magnússon, Sveinbjörn Egilsson and Jón Sigurðsson from the earlier portion of this century, and of the same high class only a single name—that of Rask, a great one—remains. But Rask, at the very outset of his career, made himself an Icelander by passing the better part of two years on Icelandic soil, and by long and close association with Icelandic students in Copenhagen. Of the valuable work done by such learned bodies, for instance, as the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries, far more has come from the pens and brains of Icelanders than appears on title-pages and in indices. Natives of the island are still active in the field—we purposely omit living names—and within these last years a keen scholar and a zealous student has passed away in the person of Konráð Gislason—also a lexicologist. But it ought to be acknowledged that in the generation now upon the stage, Denmark is represented by two figures of the foremost order—those of Kålund and Wimmer—while in the two youngest generations Norway has produced the brilliant group which includes Munch, Keyser, Unger, Storm, and Bugge. But the general literary production of Iceland in modern times, in branches of letters other than those we are treating of, is likewise surprising. Her people number 76,000, to which may be added 20,000 more in Northern North America who still prefer to speak their own tongue rather than the English. This is the population of a minor city in the larger lands of civilization. But an examination of the yearly output of her presses—journals, magazines, books, pamphlets—and a comparison of it with the literary productions of any other community of many times the size, will show how marvelous is the love of letters still fostered by the rocky soil to which the Eddas and Sagas of Iceland's first centuries owe their birth.

release the king from check at chessplay," though it may not be easy to comprehend the exact application of the term, which is found in no later dictionary (*rjúfa* means "to break, break up"); *at missa alla menn i skák*, "excalculari" (tabe alle brikker i skak)—*menn* referring to all the figures; *at eiga einn mann eptir*, "monochorus esse" (have en brikke tilbage)—where again *mann* may mean, apparently, either piece or pawn. Of the chessmen the following are mentioned in their proper alphabetical places:—1. *hrókur*, "longurio," "latrunculorum satelles" (brikke i skakspil)—the Danish, as well as the Latin appellation of the rook being apparently unknown both to the author and the editor. Under this rubric is repeated the proverbial phrase already entered under *skák*, namely, *at skáka i hróksvaldi*, "auctoritate alicujus potentioris niti" (trodse nogen i haab om en stormænds beskyttelse)—which is the same definition as above in slightly different words. 2. *Peð*, "latrunculorum verna," "anteambulo" (en bonde i skakspil), and figuratively, "homuncio," "nanus" (et drog, unyttigt menneske); with *peðlingur* "vel *peplingur*" (?) and *peðmaður* in the metaphorical senses of "pusio" (pusling, en little dreng), and illustrative phrases. As to other words, having more or less a chess character, *reitur*, "square," is found with the signification of "bed in a garden," and then comes *reitur i skákborði*, "loculus latrunculorum in alveo" (tavl paa skakbrættet). *Tafl*, here written, in accordance with its pronunciation, *tabl*, its derivative and compounds, do not receive any chess definitions. *Hnefi*="pugnus" (næve), also written *knefi*, is here, but there is no trace of *hnefatafl* in any of its shapes. *Stans* (that is, *stanz*) is explained as "incitae in ludo latrunculorum" (skakmat), instead of citing its real signification, "drawn game." It is not unlikely that Rask—keen linguistic student and observer as he was—when, later in life, he returned from a journey to India, the birthland of the game—was possessed of a better knowledge of chess and its technical terms.

The next lexicological work to be brought under notice is the Danish-Icelandic one of Konráð Gislason (*b.* 1808 *d.* 1891), "Dönsk orðabók með islenzkum þýðingum" (Kaupmannahöfn 1851)—a most valuable, admirably ordered work, and the result of immense industry. To be first observed is that the game of chess (skakspil) is given as *skáktafl*; to play chess is *leika að skáktafli*, *leika skáktafl*; to check is *segja skák*, *skáka*; chessboard (skakbræt) is *taflborð*, or more restrictedly, *skákborð*; chessplayer is *skákmaður*; chessman (=chess-figure) is *maður eða peð*, and a set of chessmen is the plural of the same expression—*mennirnir og peðin*, indicating that, in the author's opinion, *maður* and *menn* relate only to the higher figures—excluding the pawns. All the names of the pieces are specially treated except *konungur*; but the queen is styled *frú*, the name *drottning* being given only to the queen at cards. *Mát* (*i skák*)=Danish "skakmat," which is not literally exact; with a wider knowledge of chess usage in Iceland, it would have been *skák og mát*. Konráð Gislason's dictionary, however, is the only Icelandic one, which, so far as we know, registers the word *patt*—our "stalemate."—It is convenient to notice here, although out of its chronological order, another, much smaller and less pretentious Danish-Icelandic dictionary—but a very excellent one of its kind—the "*Ný dönsk orðabók með islenzkum þýðingum*" of the pains-taking priest, Jónas Jónasson. This hand-lexicon was issued at Reykjavik in 1896. The author makes chess (Danish, "skak") both *skák* and *tafl*, and has the phrases, "play chess," *tefla*, and "offer check," *skáka*.

He follows conversational usage in employing, in chess nomenclature, *tafl* and its compounds, and has a few quite modern chess-expressions. Chess-problem is *taflđæmi*; a game at chess (that is, the French, "partie")—for which meaning in English we lack a special equivalent—is interpreted by *tafl*; the game of chess is *skáktafl*; chessplayer is *taflmaður*, *skákmaður*; chessboard is *taflborð*, *skákborð*; checkmate and mate are both rendered by *mát*. In regard to the piece-names, queen (Danish "frue") is properly given as *drottning* (*i tafli*); the remainder noted are *hrókur*, *biskup*, *riddari* and *peð*. Under the Danish "spille" (to play), we have "to play a game of chess"=*að tefla eina skák*, which gives the added signification of "partie" to the word *skák*—a modern conversational expression. Under the Danish "leg" (game), we have end-game =*leikslok*. The noun "move" is rendered by *leikur*, to "make a move at chess" being *leika einn leik í tafli*. The dictionary's Danish vocabulary does not include "pat," (stalemate), "rokkere" (to castle) or the foreign terms "en prise," "partie remise," (Icelandic, *jafntefli*) "en passant," and so on.

In 1856, at Leipsic, Theodor Möbius—an Old-Northern linguist and bibliographer of high rank—produced his "Altnordischer Glossar," explaining the vocabularies of only a limited number of Old-Northern works, but which was, so far as it went, judiciously arranged and excellently edited, like everything that came from his well-ordered mind. The word *skák* does not come within his field, and he is not correct in his rendering of *hnettafl* or *hneftafl* as "schachspiel." He has *taflpungur*—bag for men or pieces used at chess and other games, and says that such bags were sometimes provided with jewelled bands as in the Gullþóris saga. From the same saga he cites the phrase, "*þær lèku at hnet-tafli ok var taflit alt steypt af silfri, en gylt alt hit rauða*," and interprets *taflið* as referring to the board—though, in that respect, the sentence is obscure. He likewise renders *tafl* by "move," in the quotation, *verða tafli seinni*, which is interpreted as to "come a move too late," and in a later citation from the Eyrbyggja saga which reads *þeir höfðu orðit tafli seinni en Arnkell*—but in both, the sense seems to be figurative.

Between the years 1854 and 1860 the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries issued at Copenhagen the important "Lexicon poëticum" of Dr. Sveinbjörn Egilsson (*b.* 1791, *d.* 1852), rector of the College of Iceland at Reykjavik, a deeply learned and unweariedly industrious scholar. This work is never likely to be superseded. The author's Latinity is above criticism, as is evinced by his rendering of *skák* as "ludus schacchicus—getting rid, once for all, of the "ludus latrunculorum" of his predecessors—or rather confining its use to other games than chess. Under *skák* we have *tefla skák* (to play chess), and mention is made of an anomalous genitive *skáks* (instead of *skákar*) in the compound *skáksleika* (in the Sturlunga). *Hrókur* is first defined as the bird, "pelicanus ater," the sea-raven—being the same word we are told as *hraukur*—then, secondly, as "longurio, vir longus, adjuncta ignaviæ et inertiæ notione" (being very much what we mean in English by a "lazy lout"); and thirdly, as "hodie centurio in ludo scacchico, est Persicum *roch* quod significat *a*) ingentem avem, *b*) camelum bellicum, cui insidet vir, arcu et sagittis armatus." This is less erroneous than one would expect, considering that the author quotes as his authority an article in the Copenhagen "Annaler for Nordisk Oldkyndighed" (1838-9), which treats of

chess in Iceland, and which bristles with misinformation. Under *tafl* we have *tefla tafl* (to play *tafl*), *taflpungur* ("sacculus latrunculorum"), and other compounds. A compendium of the "Lexicon poëticum," the original edition having become rare, has been published by Dr. Sveinbjörn Egilsson's son, the still living Benedikt Gröndal, a man of great ability and versatility—poet, publicist, satirist, naturalist.

It was likewise for the Royal Society of Northern Antiquaries that Eiríkur Jónsson (*b.* 1822, *d.* 1899), an Icelander, whose life, like that of Konráð Gíslason, was passed in Denmark, compiled the "Oldnordisk Ordbog" (Kjöbenhavn 1863), intended, we believe, as a sort of prose complement to the "Lexicon poëticum" of Sveinbjörn Egilsson. *Skák* includes the phrase *segja skák*, to give check; and is stated to have two specially Icelandic figurative meanings, namely, 1. A somewhat high-lying flat (level place) in a tún (the meadow surrounding an Icelandic farmstead); and 2. A (low) loft in a house, of which it embraces or covers only a portion—we translate the Danish descriptions literally, and shall return hereafter to these senses of *skák*. Under *skáktafl* we have, here as elsewhere, the phrases *leika skáktafl* and *leika að skáktafli*; while the word is also rendered "chess-play," "the game of chess," and additionally "chess-figures and chessboard as well." The two compounds *skákborð* and *skákmaður* (chessplayer) follow. Under the verb *skáka* occurs the phrase, *skáka einhverjum* (to offer check to some one—the verb thus governing the dative), with the passage, which we already know from the Ólafs saga helga, *þá skákaði jarl af hánum riddara*, rendered by "he captured a knight in giving check." Thereafter we are presented with the familiar metaphor, *skáka í hróksvaldi* (vise sig anmassende, dristig under en mægtigeres beskyttelse—the interpretation being virtually that of Björn Halldórsson); but thereafter is quoted another and similar phrase, which we have not heretofore seen, and which is said to possess the same signification, to wit, *skáka í skjóli einhvers*—to "check (attack) under the protection (shelter) of some one." *Mát* and *máta* are indicated as Icelandic. *Tefla í uppnám* is to "play a piece so that it can be taken" (*i. e.* to set it *en prise*). *Stanz* (eller *stans*) is interpreted as "stoppage" (Danish, "standsning"), but is not connected with chess, and we are told that it has no plural. *Tefli* occurs in its place without definition, but with it are cited both *jafntefli* and *þrátefli* (the latter inserted in no other dictionary)—they also without definitions. They mean respectively "drawn game" (remise) and (a game or position drawn by) "perpetual check." The chessmen explained are *hrókur*, *riddari* and *peð*. The first-named reads (we English the Danish renderings) as follows: 1. (bird), see *hraukur*; 2. the rook at chess; 3. "a tall, drowsy fellow, a lout;" 4. "the principal manager, mover; *hrókur alls fagnaðar*, the chief originator of all social amusements." It is not easy to decide at a glance how far these metaphors (3 and 4) relate to the bird, or to any other literal signification of *hrókur*. *Hnefi* is "the principal piece in a game called *hneftafl*;" and *hneftafla* is a piece in that game; while we are supplied with the usual orthographical variants. *Tafl* and its family take some space. We have already alluded to *tefli*. *Tafl*, itself is:—1. (Danish *tavleleg*, *i. e.* "table play" and *brætspil*, "tables"); *hér eru brögð í tafli*, "something underhand is going on" *b.* a move at "tables;" *verða tafli seinni*, to "be forestalled" (a move to late); 2. (Danish, *tavl*), set of men at "tables," or at chess; *hann svarfaði taflinu*, he overturned the men. The noun *tafla* is

here a board for tables, "chessboard," and subsidiarily "figures" in a game; *taflbragð* is an "artifice at tables," and in the plural *taflbrögð*, "knowledge, skill in table-play;" *taflmaður* is "one who plays tables, chess." Under the verb *tefla* we have *tefla skák*, "play chess" (St. Olaf's saga); *tefla við einhvern* (to play with or against any one); *tefla um eitthvert* (to play for something), with the proverbial saying, *þegar um líf er at tefla* (when life is at stake); *teflðr*, the participle, has a singularly modern meaning in *vera upp teflðr* (to be played out, i. e. finished, ended, exhausted).

But of the various Icelandic dictionaries that of Guðbrandur Vigfússon (Oxford 1872)—the sole author of which he was, although the title-page includes a second name—is by all odds the greatest and best; indeed it is hardly too high praise to class it among the foremost score of lexicological works—in or of any language whatever—which have hitherto seen the light.[56] To some extent it likewise treats the modern dialect of Iceland,

[56] Guðbrandur Vigfússon (*b.* March 13, 1827, *d.* January 31, 1889) is the representative Icelandic scholar. With a knowledge which would have given him the highest place as a Germanist, he chose to restrict the work of his life to a field in which he may be said not only to have had no peer, but not even a second. For no man has ever known so thoroughly the linguistic history of his native land as he that of Iceland, and of its broader old-northern domain; and none has ever been so minutely familiar with every period, and every product, of a literature of so great a compass, and of such long duration. His erudition was not merely profound, but amazingly comprehensive. It is impossible to review the offspring of his pen, from such essays as the youthful but novel and able tractate on the chronology of the sagas of Iceland ("Um tímatal í Íslendinga sögum") to the stately volumes which he issued under the auspices of Oxford University, without a feeling of stupefaction at the depth and breadth of his learning, and the continuity and bulk of his labor. His mind and memory were imbued with all the life and lore of by-gone times. He had wandered through every highway and byway of Iceland's past, and through those of the past of all the other lands traversed and chronicled and sung by her sagamen and her skalds, until he could become, at will, a citizen of any age, a contemporary of any generation—voyaging backward, hither and thither, in time, as a man travels to and fro geographically. To employ a comparison suggested by the game of chess, he could reproduce every forgotten episode, re-shape every lost literary creation, revivify every vanished scene of all the centuries which make up the seven ages of Icelandic letters, just as the blindfold player of many simultaneous games rebuilds, after each of his moves, by a flash of volition, a wholly differing position, bringing again within his vision a battle scene which had disappeared—a field of action with schemes and stratagems, moves and counter-moves, pieces and pawns, wholly other than those which he viewed a moment before, or will view a moment later. He could almost interview the heroes, the historians, the poets of ancient days, and get the real meaning of a historical passage out of Snorri Sturluson himself, or persuade Egill Skallagrímsson to interpret an obscure *kenning*, or replace a corrupted word. "Guðbrandur," says Dr. Konrad Maurer, himself a man of gifts as marvelous, "war ein ganz ungewöhnlich begabter mann, von raschester fassungsgabe und unermüdlichem fleisse." Seine fertigkeit im lesen und in der beurtheilung von handschriften war eine ganz ausserordentliche; die verloschenste schrift vermochte er noch zu entziffern, und wochenlang konte er von morgens bis abends abschreiben ohne dass seine augen ermüdeten. Rasch wusste er sich auch in den filiationsverhältnissen der handschriften zurecht zu finden, und von hier aus für seine quellenausgaben stets den richtigen text zu wählen und die nötigen varianten auszulesen. Seine ausgebreitete bekantschaft mit der gesamten gedruckten und ungedruckten litteratur seiner heimat liess ihn über dies im vereine mit seinem bewunderungswürdigen gedächtnisse stets alle beziehungen gegenwärtig haben, die ihm für die erledigung irgend einer aufgabe von nutzen sein konten, und eine seltene kombinationsgabe gesttatete ihm aus dem reichen materiale die überraschendsten schlüsse zu ziehen." His memory was so astounding, his sense of metre and style and expression and verbal force, so acute, his knowledge of the literary phases of every locality and every age so complete, that, perhaps, as Dr. Maurer says, his trust in his own vast powers now and then betrayed him into errors, which less self-confidence would have led him, by a new verification of his authorities, to avoid. But his instinctive guesses were often better than other critics' studied certainties. His life was too industrious, and therefore too seclu-

which fact adds greatly to its value. We shall endeavour to discuss its statements at some length, and to connect with them some observations omitted when reporting the chess vocables and phrases included in preceding dictionaries.

Skák.—We are told that the word is of Persian origin; we have the verbal expression *tefla skák* (play chess), while, with the same meaning, we are given under *tefla*, the form, *tefla skáktafl*, but we nowhere find Konráð Gíslason's *leika að skáktafli* (precisely our English "play at chess.") The term for chessboard is *skákborð*, and under *tafl*, also *taflborð*, while *skáktafl*

ded, to admit of many intimacies, though the few who knew him nearly cherished for him an ardent esteem. "The more closely the career and life-work of Vigfússon are examined," asserts Mr. Edmund Gosse, "the more his genius will be found to shine, and only those who have, in some poor and undistinguished degree, followed where he led, can even begin to estimate his greatness." Enumerating the philologist's characteristics, he exclaims:—"Who that has seen it will forget that pale and fretted countenance? Who will forget the enthusiasm, the fidelity, the sweet and indulgent unworldliness?" Guðbrandur Vigfússon's colleague and fellow worker, Professor York Powell, declares that "Those who knew him will not need my testimony to his strong, sincere and generous character, his extraordinary and well-controlled memory, his wide learning in many tongues, his eager and unwearied industry, and his fine literary taste. For myself, I can only say that the longer I knew him the more I honoured, trusted and loved him." He calls him "the greatest Scandinavian scholar of our century." Another of his Oxford contemporaries, the head of Corpus Christi College, Dr. Charles Plummer, characterizes him as "one of the most remarkable men that Oxford has seen during the present century," and adds that "to say that his loss is irreparable is to use feeble language." After an enumeration of some of his works Dr. Plummer goes on:—"But in spite of all that he did, it is rather on what he was that those who knew him best will love to dwell; on his simple and noble character, his genuine and unconventional piety, his—not so much superiority to as—unconsciousness of every petty and selfish motive, his single-hearted devotion to learning, his scorn of anything like pedantry or pretence, his loyalty to his friends, his remembrance of, and gratitude for any, even the smallest acts of kindness done to himself. In the midst of those who were privileged to know him there will remain that longing memory of which the great Italian poet speaks for—

Lo di c'han detto al dolce amico addio."

Guðbrandur Vigfússon was a man of simple life, of kindly nature, of generous sentiments. As a writer of Icelandic his style was as clear as it was concise, and it possessed an unaffected, sometimes subtle charm which those who have perused his notes of travel in Norway and Germany will well remember. He rarely allowed himself to be drawn into polemics—which have such a baneful fascination for so many of his literary compatriots, with whom argument too often degenerates into abuse, and criticism into invective—even lampoons, open or anonymous, inuendoes and misstatements, leers and jeers and sneers, scurrility and calumny, being all regarded as legitimate weapons of the publicist. Of anything like this weakness of ignobler minds there is to be found almost as little in his career as in that of his great contemporary, countryman and friend, the pure-minded Jón Sigurðsson. The last work of the author of the "Dictionary," though left nearly finished, has not yet seen the light. It was a book on the Origins of Iceland, comprising the Landnáma, or Book of Settlement, and other works relating to the earliest age of Icelandic history and the foundation of the Icelandic state. It will doubtless reach the learned public in time, and will add to the vast debt which the world owes to him and to his memory. A complete list of his multitudinous works, and of the biographies published since his death, compiled by his friend, Jón Þorkelsson the younger, and accompanied by an excellent life and portrait, will be found in the periodical "Andvari" (XIX, pp. 1-43, Reykjavik 1894). He was buried, in the mourning presence of all learned Oxford, under the green turf and amid the quiet walks of the cemetery of St. Sepulchre. The spires and towers of the noblest of universities, upon which his labours shed such lustre, rise above the grave of one of the two greatest Icelanders of the nineteenth century. The halls of the ancient school have sheltered few scholars, whether English or foreign, whether of earlier or later times, whose work was more arduous, more sincere, more brilliant, or likely to be more enduring than that of this adopted Oxonian—over whose birth-place gleam the auroras of Iceland.—The following unpublished letter from Dr. Guðbrandur Vigfússon was written

is restrictedly defined as "a game of chess" (that is, "*partie*,") for which there are numerous references to the old writings—one to the year 1155 (the partie, which we know of, between Valdemar the Great and one of his courtiers), another to 1238 (Bishop Bótólf and the deacon), and again to deeds of the 14th century in the "Diplomatarium Norvegicum" (Kristiania 1849-95) —in which last the meaning would hardly be "a game," but rather a "set of chessmen," or a "chessboard," or both. Here Guðbrandur Vigfússon, in accordance with the encyclopædic character of his lexicon, says:—"There is no authentic record of chess in Scandinavia before the 12th century, for the

just before he made his last visit to Copenhagen. It alludes to his "Origines Islandicæ," and some other of his literary plans; it will give, too, an idea of his terse, informal English. It is dated from the Deanery, Winchester, March 31, 1887:—"I write this with a somewhat relieved mind, having lately cleared my desk, and sent to press a mountain of MSS towards the *Origines Islandicæ*. The Landnámabók is all in print, text, translation and introduction, some 240 pages. The whole work is (after the fashion of the *Corpus*) to be in 2 vols, divided into five books, the books into sections, whereof Landnámabók is I. 1.; the 2d book is on the Constitution, *Libellus* leading, and ancient Laws; the 3d book on Conversion, and Lives of Bishops. All this is in the printers' hands, and makes volume one. The 4th, old Sagas; 5th, Wineland and Arctic records.

I am now on the wing to Copenhagen, on a short visit, to finish some MS work. I did a pile of work in 1884—so I shall one day be an emancipated man here, independent of Copenhagen.

It has long been a day dream—a waking dream as we say—to see Italy, and I long more to see Florence than even Rome; on account of her pure Italian, glorious records, Michel-Angelo. The gods know whether I may not one day make use of your most kind offer.—I live here in England (Oxford) an hermit life, have a few friends—Mr. Powell in first rank of such; but don't mix in society, never did, never could. In a drawing-room I feel dullish and uncomfortable; it is a sort of 'mortal antipathy' as your countryman, Wendell Phillips, so well and appropriately calls it. In term time I have a few lectures to give (though usually reading with a class, no public lectures), and in the vacations I have the only chance of working with Mr. Powell, who is all the terms taken up with lecturing and coaching—a great pity to use him for that. In the long vacation we mean to do a great spell of work (or rather he) in translating for the 2d volume, so that the bulk may be in, in the course of the summer; then remains the Index (horribile dictu), and a few essays.

I have some hope next Xmas [of being able to reach Italy] or if not, then next Easter or Lent. In the summer I am besides bound to be here, for then the printers have more leisure, and they promise to make two-fold progress in June-September; and that means a great deal.

Be so good as to give my respectful compliments to your mother. Next I beg you excuse a hasty and disordered letter. Is there any thing I can do at Copenhagen for you? if so, a message will reach me addressed to Mr. Bruun, the Librarian of the Royal Library (St. Kongl. Bibl.).

I should advise you to get photographs of specimens of these old types:—

1. 1540-58.

2. John Mathieson's types 1559-1575.

3. Bp. Gudbrand's fresh types, the first book I saw in them was Hemmingsen's *Via Vitae*, 1576, 12° or 8°—I write from memory. These types were battered and were used for 168 years—the last book I have seen in them being Widalins [Postilla], 6th edition of 1744.

4. Bp. Harboe's types.

5. Hrappsey types.

I made some very informal studies on this subject in 1860 or about then, so something hangs or sticks still in my memory.

I am here staying a few days with my old friend of Oxford and Dictionary memory, Dean Kitchin. By to morrow I leave for Denmark via Harwich and Esbjerg, west of Jutland; hope to be at Copenhagen by Easter. Mean to see old friends in Jutland, my countryman, Hannes Finsen, in Ribe, and another Danish friend in Aarhus. Have in my head some queer theories about ultima [Thule] being in Jutland; will see it by the way. Powell and I have spoken of making a little pamphlet at the forthcoming Rask centenary—*Origines Danicæ*, a brief essay on this subject I am big with."

passage cited from the Fornaldar sögur" (that is from one of the vellums of the Hervarar saga) "is mythical," and as to Olafs saga helga, he considers the game between King Canute and Úlf Jarl to be *hnefatafl*, as it undoubtedly was. He goes on to inform us that "in Iceland there is still played a peculiar kind of chess, called *vald-skák*, in which no piece, if guarded, can be taken or exchanged." This variety, it may be remarked *en passant*, must be of Icelandic invention, since nothing similar is reported from other lands, and we can add that, only a few years ago,—twenty years after the publication of the "Dictionary"—its practice was still continued in the island. It must be one of the oddest "abarten des schachspiels," as the Germans call them. *Skákmaður* is interpreted both as "chessman" (figure), and "chess-player;" while the other, but similarly formed *skákmaður* (being, as we are told, the Old High German "scâhman" and modern German "schächer") signifies "robber," "highwayman," and is cited as occurring [only?] in the Þiðrekssaga, or story of Dieterich (Theodoric). The verb *skáka* (check) "is frequent in modern usage" as a chess term, and is used, in a metaphorical sense, in *skáka í því skjóli*, "to check one in that shelter, *i. e.* to take advantage of one (unduly)." A modern use of this metaphor may be seen in the following sentence written very recently:—*hann skákar* (checks, attacks) *í því skjóli* (shelter, protection, cover) *að hann sleppi við ábyrgðina*, "he attacks (acts) under that cover, so that he may escape responsibility." In the *skák* rubric we have, too, a definition, (marked as section II.), given to another figurative usage, "metaphorically a *seat, bench*, in the popular phrase, *tyltu þér á skákina*, take a seat!" Looking back, therefore, at Eirikur Jónsson's vocabulary, and at the present one, we note that *skák*, in its figurative sense, means:—1. an (elevated?) portion of the home-meadow about an Icelandic *bœr*; 2. a low loft in a house covering only a part of the ground-story; and 3. (here), a seat, bench, settle. All three have been verbally explained, by a native Icelandic scholar, as bearing a certain resemblance to each other—all conveying the idea of narrowness and length and regularity, or rectangularity (like the shape of a bench or settle). It is possibly too bold to suggest a rank or file on the chessboard (of the same outline) as the link which connects them with *skák*=chess. It is also suggested that definitions 2 and 3 may be one and the same, namely, a portion of a loft arranged as a large settle. The relation to *skáka* (check) of the meaning "attack" (in the phrase cited, *skáka í því skjóli*) is less remote, but the whole subject demands investigation by a competent Icelandic linguist.

Names of the figures.—The special *scacchic* significations of *konungur* (kongur), *drottning* and *biskup* are not referred to, although we have them sub *peð* in the compounds, *kongspeð* (king's pawn) *drottningarpeð* (queen's pawn) and *biskupspeð* (bishop's pawn). But the following are included in their alphabetical places:—1. *hrókur* (rook) the derivation of which is set down as "from the Indian *roch*=elephant's castle, through the English—which, as is now known, is not correct. The word *roch* or *ruch* does not exist in any Indian tongue; and, in no language, does any word similar to it mean "elephant's castle" (the writer confusing the English "castle," as a chess term, with the German *thurm* and Danish *taarn*—both meaning originally "tower;" and perhaps also with *alfin*, *alfil*, the mediæval name of the chess bishop, formed from the Arabic *il*=the, and *fil*=elephant—thus affording, if our suggestion be correct, a good instance of the complex con-

fusion which usually arises when a philologist, ignorant of chess and its history, tries to write about the game and its terms). The truth seems to be —to state the matter briefly—that the Sanskrit name of what we call the rook was *ratha* (in the Bengali idiom, *rotha*), meaning (war)chariot, and that when this word had made its way to Perso-Arabian regions it found a somewhat similar vocable—say *rokh* or *rukh*—in use (with a very different signification in Persia but) among the Arabic people as the name of a waggon, or other vehicle, and that the influence of false etymological ideas led to the substitution of the extra-Indian word for the Sanskrit term. This statement is not too clear—and not at all satisfying—but the exact source and story of the technical chess-word *rook* (and consequently *hrókur*), are still shrouded in doubt, despite the efforts of many Orientalists to elucidate them. Its connection with the appellation of a gigantic Eastern bird called *roc* (in the "1001 Nights") is as fabulous as the existence of the bird itself; and equally devoid of demonstration are some other etymological affiliations which have been suggested. Arrived in Arabic Spain, the word took the form of *roque*, and, subsequently, in early Italian of *rocco*, in old French of *roc* and in English of *rook*, adapting itself in England by popular assimilation to the already existing form "rook" (the name of a bird); from England it passed—with a knowledge of chess—to Iceland, where an old word *hrókur* (apparently of varied meaning, but most likely cognate, both etymologically and in signification, with the English bird-name) was likewise in existence, and was seized upon as furnishing, to the popular mind, the proper orthography. What is notable, as we have before hinted, is that the only nations, outside of the Romance group, to permanently adopt the ancient Perso-Arabic name were England and Iceland—so that the geography of the term indicates the path of chess after its introduction (through Spain) to Europe. Guðbrandur Vigfússon's definition is "the rook or castle in chess," and he has the compound, *hróksmát*, "checkmate with the rook." In connection with this word, he cites two proverbial phrases, the first of which is: *skáka í hróksvaldi*, "to check in the guard of the rook." At first sight, his rendering of the saying seems to be meaningless as an English clause, and impossible as the description of a movement at chess. But recurring to the translations of the saying given by Björn Halldórsson and Eiríkur Jónsson, we can see that, as a metaphor, the signification is to "show one's self bold or arrogant towards another, knowing that we can do so safely, being ourselves under powerful protection;" to "attack another boldly, protected by higher influence." The literal meaning would seem to be to "give check to the king with a piece that is guarded by another," as when a bishop gives check, on an adjoining square, but cannot be taken by the king because it is protected by a rook—which would be exactly to *skáka í hróksvaldi*. The synonomous phrase, *skáka í skjóli*, we have examined under *skák*. The second of the proverbial sayings under *hrókur* is *eiga sèr hrók í horni*, of which the lexicographer himself furnishes no rendering, and which none of his predecessors cite. Literally it is to "have or possess a rook in the corner;" figuratively, it would be to "have support at one's back, or in reserve," to know that one has a protector or aid in a known place, and therefore at once available in case of need—just as when the white queen threatens to attack, or mate, the adverse king by moving upon the latter's first or royal rank, the player of the black pieces may

comfortably feel that he can nullify the action by means of his rook, which is still standing in its corner. The use of *hrókur*, in these metaphorical expressions, is evidently owing, in part at least, to the fact that *hrókur* is a distinctively chess word, while king and queen and bishop and knight are not; they, therefore, do not lend themselves so easily to similes, or metaphors, which originate on the chess table. It is under *mát* that we must seek one of the compounds of *hrókur*, which is *hróksmát*, a mate effected by means of a rook. 2. *Riddari* has, as a subsidiary signification, "a knight in chess," with references to Ólafs saga helga and to the Sturlunga saga—being the episodes of Knút (Canute) and Úlf, and of young Þorgils and Gizur Jarl. But no compounds are cited, although we have under *peð* (see below) *riddarapeð*, that is, "knight's pawn." 3. *Peð* has for its only etymological elucidation, "Fr[ench] pèon," and is defined as "a pawn in chess," and thereafter are *kongspeð*, "a king's pawn," *hrókspeð*, *riddarapeð*, *drottningarpeð*, *biskupspeð*; *peðmát*, with the citation of Mágus saga, 23. 44 (the tales of Hirtungur and Rögnvald), or *peðrifur*, "checkmate with a pawn." Next follows, under a rubric of its own, *peðmaður*, "a footman" (with a citation of the Karlamagnús saga, 31); and with the additional gloss, "a pawn in chess = *peð*." Noteworthy is the derivation of the Icelandic form from the nominative stem of "pedes" (*ped-*), rather than from the low Latin inflectional stem (*pedon-*), of which the Romance and English languages have availed themselves ("pion," "pawn"). Or is there a long-lingering reminiscence of the Arabic and Persian words (*baidaq*, *piyádah*—as they are transliterated by Van der Linde—in the Icelandic form?

Other Chess Terms. — The remaining words of a chess character occurring in the "Icelandic-English Dictionary" are:—1. *Mát*, no derivation being suggested; the definition is "checkmate," with references to the Víglundar saga 31 (the episode of Örn), the Fornaldar sögur (I., 443—the Hervarar-saga), and the Bragða-Mágus saga (the Rögnvald tale); "various kinds of mate are *peðmát*, *gleiðarmát*, *fretstertsmát*, *hróksmát*. *heimamát*," to several of which we have already alluded. *Gleiðarmát* literally means a "straddle-mate," and is described by Mr. Ólafur Davíðsson, as a mate or mates effected by the queen and rooks in three corners of the board, the king to be mated being in the fourth—being doubtless one of the successive mates in the same game, on which we have commented in our first essay; its title comes from the adjective *gleiður*, "standing astraddle," "with one's legs wide apart." The verb *máta* has merely the definition:—"to checkmate, in chess."—2. *Jafntefli* is given as "an equal, drawn game," citing the Víglundar saga (the episode translated in an abridged shape in a preceding page), but it is not treated as a special term, the inference being that it is applied to other games. The similarly formed compound, *þrátefli* (drawn by perpetual check), finds no place anywhere in the "Dictionary," perhaps on account of its modernity. 3. *Uppnám*, of which the second meaning given is "a chess term, *tefla í uppnám*, to expose a piece so that it can be taken (Sturlunga saga, iii. 123)"—the passage being the known one from the anecdote of Þorgils skarði); "hence the phrase, *vera í uppnámi*, to be in immediate danger." Of course, *í uppnám* (accusative) and *í uppnámi* (dative) are exactly the French *en prise* (of which, for lack of an equivalent expression, we make use in English). As we have elsewhere suggested, it is worthy of remark that a technical chess expression

of this character should have been invented and established in Iceland five hundred years ago—happily formed and precise as it is—when many of the modern tongues of Europe have been satisfied to borrow a foreign phrase to describe this chess situation. Literally *uppnám* means the "taking up," in the sense of "capture," and *í uppnámi* is "in the position of being taken up (picked up), or captured." 4. *Vald* (meaning "power," "might," "authority") receives a subsidiary interpretation as "in chess, a guard," with the compounds: *hróksvald*, *peðsvald*, the former of which we have discussed, indicating, as the most suitable rendering, to be "defended by," *peðsvald* thus signifying, "defended by a pawn." 5. *Leppur* has in the "Dictionary" only the literal senses of "lock of hair; a rag, tatter," no mention being made of its modern employment in chess as "interposed piece," which, it is possible, grew out of the sense of "a filling" for a crack, hole or the like, or a "stop-gap," inherent by daily usage in "rag." 6. *Stanz*, of which the same note may be taken of the absence of any chess definition, is explained as "akin to *staðsa* (ðs=nz" by a philological law), a rare verb having in it the stem *stand*, the equivalent of our similar English form. It is interpreted as "a standstill, hesitation," and, in a phrase, "amazement;" it is used in Icelandic chess, as already noted, as "a game drawn by reason of lack of mating power." The noun is followed by a verb, *stanza*, "to pause, stop."—These include, as is believed, all the terms relating to chess which are discoverable in the Oxford dictionary. The most important omission is perhaps *patt* (stalemate), which is left unrecorded because it is never met with in any of the classical writings.

Tafl, *hnefatafl*.—The former word is said by Dr. Guðbrandur Vigfússon to be "from the Latin *tabula*, but borrowed at a very early time, for it is used even in the oldest poems;" and it is described as "a game, like the Old-English *tables* or *draughts*; used also of the old *hneftafl*, and later of chess and various other games"—whereafter follow numerous quotations. Then are cited the compounds *hnefatafl*, *skáktafl* (chess) and *goðatafl*, as well as the popular sayings:—*verða tafli seinni*, "to be too late," literally "to be too late at or for the game;" *brögð í tafli*, "tricks in the game," "foul play." Finally we are told that *tafl* is used "also of dice-throwing, dicing," and illustrative passages are given. The rubric closes with various compounds, in which *tafl* is the first element, such as *taflborð*, "a chess-board (for playing the *hneftafl* or chess);" *taflbrögð*, "feats of playing;" *taflfé*, "a bet" [literally, "game-money"]; *taflmaður*, "a player at chess or *hneftafl*;" *taflpungur*, "a bag for the pieces;" *taflspeki*, "skill in playing"—all with citations. It should be observed that in the quotations in which *tafl* appears to mean "set of men," or "board," or both "men and board," and its plural *töfl* seems to have the sense of "pieces," "figures,"—some of which senses we have noted in reading the Krókarefs saga—the author attempts no precise elucidation of these distinctions, a fact which doubtless comes both from his want of chess-knowledge, or knowledge of what the game, *tables*, was, and from the late and, therefore, uncommonly modern character of their significations. His next rubric is the brief one devoted to *tafla*, "a piece in a game of tables." Under the verb which is formed from the noun *tafl*, to wit, *tefla*, the rendering is "to play at chess or draughts," and, after several passages, is noted the metaphorical phrase, *tefla* [any one] *upp*, "to take one up, beat in a game of draughts." Like the primitive noun, "the word is

also used of dice; the passion of the Teutons for dice is attested by Tacitus (Germania, ch. 24);" and next, the Icelandic phrase, *um lífit er at tefla*, is translated "life is on the die," that is, life is at stake, "used metaphorically of a great emergency." This section is followed by two others, *tefli*, a noun employed—as would seem to be the author's opinion—solely in the compound *jafntefli*. "a drawn game," which he refrains from illustrating; and *tefling*, "playing," also without citations. It ought to be constantly borne in mind that nowadays the words *tafl* and *tefla* are in as much use as chess-words, as are "chess" and "play," that is "play at chess"—and so they probably have been nearly ever since the introduction of chess. Now we come to the difficult word *hnefi*. First of all, we must call attention to the fact that Guðbrandur Vigfússon seemingly reckons it as a vocable differing essentially from *hnefi* = fist (the Scotch "nief," or "nieve," Danish "næve," as he tells us), since he puts it in a separate rubric; but he does not venture on any etymological suggestion in reference to it. He explains it as "the king in a kind of chess played by the ancients" (*i. e.*, the old Icelanders); "the game was called *hnefatafl*, which is variously spelt *nettafl* and *hnettafl* (which are contracted or assimilated forms); *hneftafl; hnottafl* (a bad form) in a spurious verse; *hnefatafl* (the true form). The game is best described in Friðþjófs saga, and in one of the riddles in Hervarar saga (where, however, the rhymed replies are not genuine): 'Who are the maids that fight about their unarmed lord, the dark all day defending, but the fair slaying?' The players were two, as in chess; there was only one king (*hnefi*), here called 'the unarmed lord'; the pieces (*töflur*) were white and red, the white attacking, the red defending the *hnefi: það er hnefatafl, enar dökkri verja hnefann, en hinar hvítari sækja*. Whenever tafl is mentioned, this particular game seems [in the ancient writings] to be understood; and the fatal game of chess between King Canute and Earl Úlf in Roskilde A. D. 1027 was probably a *hneftafl*. We see from Morkinskinna (p. 186) that it was still played at the beginning of the 12th century, but in after times it was superseded by the true chess (*skák*); both games were probably of the same origin."—the last remark indicating clearly the limited acquaintance with chess and its annals enjoyed by the lexicographer ("der wol wenig von der geschichte des schachspiels versteht," says Dr. V. d. Linde of this final phrase).[57] For whatever we may not know about *hnefatafl*, we do know that it could never have lain in the same cradle as chess. The rubric closes with the citation of a compound substantive, *hnettafla*, "the piece of the *hnefi*;" and by a reference to the words *halatafl* and *hunn*, with which we are likely to have to do hereafter.—We have omitted several citations made under *hnefi*. Dr. Guðbrandur Vigfússon's too brief description, though it cannot be called an elucidation, was the earliest at all consistent notices of this form of "tables." It is impossible to take final leave of the Oxford work, without expressing once more our opinion of the value—despite some errors—of its treatment of the terminology of chess. It is of far more importance than all that had been previously written—not only in dictionaries, but in other books as well—in regard to the oldest periods of the Icelandic game.

The newest general dictionary of the old Norse, or ancient Icelandic, is that of Dr. Johan Fritzner, first issued in 1867, and published anew, enlarged into three goodly octavos, at Kristiania in 1886-1896. It is a compilation

[57] "Quellenstudien," p. 61.

of extraordinary labor, and, as a vast storehouse of passages from the old writings, is of the highest utility. But its author's knowledge of the laws of etymology and of foreign idioms was not too extended—indeed the lineage and affiliation of the vocables which he treats seem hardly to have come —in a manner at all complete—within the scope of his work; but in the case of chess terms he once or twice attempts to consider the matter of derivation, doing so, however, with disastrous results. He does not illustrate the word *skákmaður*, in its chess sense—as he does not find it in the classic period—but only in the sense, *skákmaður*=robber (Danish, *röver*), noting, in a proper way, its Old High German and New High German kinship ("ght. *scâhman*, nht. *schächer*")—though here may be, so far as Icelandic is concerned, another case of an effort at popular etymology on the part of the saga's compiler—and ends with passages from the Þiðreks saga. In the next column, he treats *skáktafl*, "skakspil, bræt med tilhørende brikker (töflur)," then, after entering his illustrative quotations, he turns into the field of etymology, and says:—"At skakspil i det latinske sprog heder *ludus latronum* eller *latrunculorum* synes henpege derpaa, at vi i *skáktafl* har det samme *skák* som forekommer i *skákmaðr*"—that is, in the *skákmaðr*=robber of the preceding column. This means:—That chess in Latin being called *ludus latronum* or *latrunculorum* would seem to indicate that in *skáktafl* [=chess] we have the same *skák* which appears in *skákmaðr*" [=robber]. This is a gem of blundering. To understand it fully, we most remember that in Latin, *latro*, of which *latrunculus* is a diminutive, signifies "robber." Now, first of all, chess is not called in (ancient) Latin *ludus latrunculorum*, nor by any other name; for the Romans knew nothing of chess, since it was not introduced into any part of the Roman dominions until some centuries after they had ceased to be Roman, and, in fact, was probably not in existence anywhere until the Roman empire had itself gone out of being. It is true that in very early modern times, some writers of Latin, out of ignorance, employed "ludus latrunculorum" to designate the game of chess, but the more intelligent have used "ludus scacchorum, (scaccorum)," a neo-latinism formed from the oriental name of the game, at least as far back as when the friar Jacobus de Cessolis wrote his widely read *Liber de moribus hominum*, towards the beginning of the thirteenth century. The old Romans did, indeed, have a diversion styled "ludus latrunculorum," that is, "the game of the little robbers," but it had no resemblance to chess except that it was a "brettspiel," played with pieces, like many other games. So much for *ludus latrunculorum!* Now for *skákmaðr!* The *skák* in this word—which occurs, to our knowledge, nowhere but in what may fairly be characterized as the German saga of Þiðrek, a story told in connection, principally, with localities south of the Baltic—was once supposed by some etymologists to be of Hebrew derivation, but only two lexicologists, so far as we know, Magnús Ólafsson, as we have heard, and Dr. Fritzner—have ever connected it in any way with the word or game, "chess." It is now generally recognized to be, as Dr. Fritzner's etymological statement tends to show, a word of Teutonic origin, occurring even in Anglo-saxon, although it is lacking among the very oldest Germanic forms. On the other hand, the word *chess*—if one may here repeat the oft-recorded explanation—and, consequently, the word *skák* (as in *skákmaðr*=chess-player), which is merely another form of *chess*—both come from a Persian word (*shâh*—the final *h* pronounced like a German *ch*), meaning "king," which

word is even now a living vocable in Persian, being the title still borne by Persia's ruler. *Chess* and *skák*, therefore, signify "(the game of) the king," and have nothing whatever to do with any robbers—either Latin or Germanic.—Another instance of Dr. Fritzner's etymological skill cannot be explained with so much ease. Under the somewhat objectionable expression *fret-stertumát* he reproduces the meaning given to it in the "Index linguæ gothicæ," of Verelius (1691)—which we have already copied in its proper place—and then says (we render literally):—"This explanation is assuredly erroneous, and originates in the similarity of the *fret*, occurring in the word, to the verb *freta*; but *fret* is rather a corruption of *fers*, which primarily had the signification of vezier, but afterwards took the form of *fierge*, *vierge*, from which was evolved the name of 'queen,' which this piece now bears in the game of chess—see A. van der Linde, 'Geschichte und Literatur des Schachspiels,' II, 150 ff, compare 157." Thereupon Dr. Fritzner cites the Mágus saga, and refers the reader to an even more objectionable term *fuðryttumát*, in relation to the first element of which he has a briefer but similar explication:—"In *fuðryttumát* the word (*fuðrytta*) seems to correspond to the Latin *virgo*, French *vierge*, which, in the Middle Ages, was a common appellation for the queen at chess," and again he cites V. d. Linde's "Geschichte" (II., pp. 149 ff. and especially the notes on pp. 150-151). Although he does not say so precisely, it is pretty plain that he has got into his head what Dr. V. d. Linde calls, on one of the very pages (150) referred to by the lexicographer, "das berühmte wortspiel mit der vierge," perhaps originally a half playful blunder which has been traced no further back than the year 1610, seemingly finding its birth in a once popular anonymous Latin poem entitled "De Vetula," first published at that date. In a day when the science of etymology was young, some one else, if not the author of the poem just alluded to, ventured to suggest that because the Persian word *fers*—meaning vezier—which was used in the period of Asiatic-European chess as the name of the piece standing beside the king—had a certain phonetic and orthographic resemblance to the French *vierge*—meaning "virgin," therefore (a queen, too, being a female) the chess people had finally bestowed its present appellation upon what is now the game's most powerful piece. In other words, it was a case of what we call popular etymology, or etymology by incorrect assimilation—such as we have two or three times cited in earlier portions of the present work. But this is just what the pages of Dr. V. d. Linde's work, to which Dr. Fritzner appeals, are devoted to disproving, as he would have seen by a closer examination. The use of *virgo* or *vierge*, by a few comparatively late writers, as a title for the chess-queen, had nothing to do, in any etymological way, with the old Persian name, *fers*. But, be that as it may, no one who compares several of the other Icelandic chess terms with those here explained by Dr. Fritzner will have any belief whatever in his theory of the affinity between *fers* and *vierge* and the cited Icelandic names for certain styles of checkmate, thus strangely glossed by the industrious Norwegian lexicologist. Chess reached Iceland in the 12th century, many generations before *virgo* (or *vierge*) was ever used as the name of the queen, and many more before any ignorant writer thought of recognizing its likeness to *fers*. After the century of its arrival, there could not well have been—so slight did the intercourse soon become—any bond of union between continental and Icelandic chess, by means of which this fantastic

notion could have travelled North. But the very sight of the different words which Dr. Fritzner proposes to bring into such close relations will suffice to convince the linguistic student of the absurdity of his suggestion, aside from its historic impossibility.—Dr. Fritzner's other chess-words are *riddari*; *hrókur* (under which are cited the modern-Latin *roccus* of Du Cange, and the old French *roc* from La Carne de St. Palaye's and Littré's dictionaries); *peðmaðr* (but not *peð*), with etymological references to Latin *pedes* and Old French *pion*; *peðmát* and *peðsmát*; and *uppnám*, which he interprets as "removal" (borttagelse), citing the passage from Sturlunga (II., p. 105—Þorgils saga skarða), and saying that the knight, in the quotation, is placed "so that the adversary can take it" (saaledes at modparten kan tage den), which is as precisely as it can be described without using the proper technical term, *en prise*.

To these notes on the treatment of chess terms by the compilers of Icelandic dictionaries, or word-lists, extended as they are, something might still, very likely, have been added by more careful research, as well as by consulting the glossaries published in connection with a good many editions of the sagas, and of other ancient Icelandic writings. Of course, there are not a few technical words connected with the chess of later periods which are found in no printed vocabulary. Some of those of which no lexicographer has availed himself—are doubtless preserved in the MS dictionary of Jón Ólafsson (frá Grunnavík), which we shall find frequently cited in another place, or in similar inedited collections; others—especially those of the present day (like *hrókskipti*=castling, for instance)—have never been written down in any list, whether MS or printed. But the number of words relating to chess and its practice which we have been able to gather from well-known and easily accessible lexicons forms an abundant proof of the unusual part which the game has played in the life and literature of Iceland. Moreover the many metaphors and proverbial sayings, drawn from the chessboard and the movements of its figures, which we have encountered in the course of our investigations, are so many additional demonstrations of the same fact.

Dr. Van der Linde and the Spilabók.

On the very last page (412) of one of his really *epochmachende* works, the "Quellenstudien zur Geschichte des Schachspiels" (1881), Dr. Antonius V. d. Linde has a brief notice of the diminutive "Spilabók," printed at Akureyri, on Iceland's northern shore, in 1858, which devotes several of its contracted pages to chess. He begins by saying that just as the final proofs of the "Quellenstudien" reached him, he received, for inspection, from the distinguished German chess-writer and chess-collector, Mr. T. v. d. Lasa, a copy of a miniature book of games (miniaturspielbuch) in Icelandic, which its owner had acquired with a good deal of effort. He thereupon gives its title in full;[58] and then follow a description and criticism of the newly discovered manual, evidently written with haste, and without having an Icelandic scholar at hand:—"Die schachstücke heissen: kongur, drottning eða frú, byskup, riddar [riddari], hrókar [hrókur] eða fílarn [fílar], peð—also kein traditionelles sögurschach sondern (wie das angebliche keltische

[58] "Spilabók, sem kennir að spila Domino- og Gná-spil, einnig Skák, Damm o. fl.—Kostnaðarmaður: Jósef gullsmiður Grímsson.—Akureyri 1858. Í prentsmiðju Norðuramts-skólans, hjá H. Helgasyni." 32°. f. [1], pp. 4-32. (3. Skáktafl, pp. 19-29).

schach der Irländer und das moderne schach der Portugiesen) bloss übersetzung aus dem englischen. Man darf zwar nicht aus den regeln solcher kleinen sammelbücher mit sicherheit auf die gebräuche des landes schliessen, allein es erregt doch ein ungünstiges vorurteil gegen das skandinavische Ströbeck, wenn noch im jahre 1858 nicht nur spielereien wie peðrifmat"—and here he refers to his extract in the "Geschichte des Schachspiels" (II., p. 178) from Eggert Olafsson's notice of modern Icelandic chess—"gelehrt werden, sondern wenn sogar eine rochade vorgeschrieben wird, wo der könig z. b. von **e1** nach **b1** oder **c1**, und der roch nach **c1** oder **d1** zieht," and thereupon his comments close with a reproduction, between parentheses, of the portion of the booklet upon which he bases his final gibe: (Á meðan ekki er búið að færa konginn og hrókana úr stað getur maður hrókskipt, þ. e.: skipt um reit við hrókinn með konginum, þannig, að maður setur konginn á riddara eða byskups reit og hrókinn á frúar eða byskups reit, *eptir því hvoru megin hrókskipti er*, það er að skilja, þegar enginn maður er á milli þeirra, því ekki má kongur eða hrókur stökkva yfir aðra menn). The mention of Iceland, or Icelandic chess, or in this case, the opening of a lilliputian volume printed in Iceland, is the red rag which is always sure to excite the critical rage of Dr. V. d. Linde. On such occasions, he assumes a sort of ox-eye glare, and proceeds at once to toss the object of his wrath high into the air. But generally—if we may turn our metaphor inside out—his howls prove to be hardly more real or logical than so many Irish bulls. In the instance under contemplation we have him at his worst, and must take him into examination in the order of his truly bovine cavils—as they turn out to be: 1. He extracts the Icelandic names of the chess figures from the book, and then triumphantly shouts:—"Ah, here is no saga-chess, but only the merest translation from the English!" But does it not occur to him that the names of the pieces—so far as they are cited in the sagas—are all virtually translations from the English, and are the very same as are found in the list he is scornfully holding up? In what saga does he find any other? Or, if he means that anybody has declared that piece-names, special to the sagas, exist in modern Icelandic chess, when they do not—then by whom and where is such an assertion made? Or does he mean something else? Those who are familiar with his ways and writings will opine from his allusions to the Celtic chess of the Irish, and to the modern chess of the Portuguese—references which have such an enigmatic air—that he really wishes to say—what he has before asserted elsewhere—that the pretence of anything like early Icelandic chess is simply a whim of the ignorant. 2. He follows this up by a slur on the Scandinavian Ströbeck—a name which nobody but himself has given to Iceland—whereby he desires to imply that, although it has been maintained that chess has been cultivated in Iceland with something like the devotion with which it has been said to be cultivated at the North German village of Ströbeck—"mit seinen sagenhaften starken schachspielern," as he himself calls the Ströbeck practitioners ("Geschichte," I., p. 312)—yet any such assumption, as to Iceland, is incorrect. But if it has indeed been played much in that island, as ill-informed people maintain, then it has been played in an abominable style as he is now going to show. 3. There is, for instance, *peðrifmat*; what—he seems to say—does the reader say to that? This word, remarkably enough, is not Icelandic at all, but wholly "Van-der-Lindian."—It neither occurs in

the "Spilabók," which is under criticism, nor in the reference, which the critic himself makes, to the narrative borrowed by himself from Eggert Ólafsson. The explanation of this fact is that, if it did occur, it would be as a linguistic malformation, which no Icelander could possibly be led to concoct. *Peðrif* (that is to say, in the nominative, *peðrifur*) means "mate (by a pawn)," and *mát* (not *mat*) means "mate," so that the two terms combined would be as if we were to talk in English of a kind of mate called "checkmate mate," or "smothered-mate mate." What Dr. V. d. Linde intends to say is doubtless simply *peðrifur*, but the blunder of reading the abnormity *peðrifmat* in two different places and in two different works, where it did not exist at all, betrays a state of mind hardly conducive to sober criticism. But why are we told that it is a "fantastic trick" (spielerei)? Why should "mate by a pawn" or "pawn's mate" be any more ridiculous than a good many other chess eccentricities, which are to be found uncondemned, in Dr. V. d. Linde's and many other people's works on chess? Why is it a "spielerei," when the "odds of the capped pawn," or "mate with a *pion coiffé*" is not? Why is it any more of a "spielerei" than a "suicidal problem," or a "smothered mate?" Why is it more of a "spielerei" than any one of a hundred singular conditional problems set forth in the critic's own most interesting chapter on "Das problemschach des mittelalters,"[59] for instance, one, in which white "gives check with one pawn and mates with another;" or another, in which there is a "mate in three moves, the bishop on b 4 moving only when he captures a piece;" or still another in which there is a "mate in five moves with the bishop at g 6," and so on. 4., this being his most serious insinuation. He observes, preliminarily, that "one cannot, with certainty, determine anything about the usages of a country from such a small compilation, but nevertheless it excites an unfavorable prejudice, when, in the year 1858, not only are such fantastic plays as *peðrifmát* still taught, but even a method of castling is prescribed, in which the king is moved, for example to **b 1** or **c 1**, and the rook to **c 1** or **d 1**." It is true that the mode of castling is prescribed in the little volume, only the prescription is exactly in accordance with the rules for castling all over the wide world of chess—even in the works written or edited by Dr. V. d. Linde. The trouble, as usual, is not with Iceland, or Icelandic chess, or the diminutive Icelandic manual, but with the critic. At Wiesbaden—the same last page of his book is dated at that city—there was evidently no Icelandic interpreter, and the critic, unaided, failed to understand the conditional phrase which we have underscored in the Icelandic text given—*eptir því hvoru megin hrókskipti er*. We will now render literally the whole extract in which Dr. V. d. Linde has discovered such a mare's nest:—"So long as neither the king nor the rook has moved from its place, the player can castle, that is, change the squares of the rook and the king in such a manner that he places the king on the knight's [g 1] or the bishop's square [c 1], and the rook on the queen's [d 1] or the bishop's square [f 1], *according to the side on which the castling takes place*—that is to say, when no other piece is between these two pieces, for neither king nor rook can leap over other men." Dr. V. d. Linde thus reads both his Icelandic and the squares of the chess-board wrongly. It is easy, however, to see that in *castling on the king's side* the king is moved to the knight's square [g 1] and the rook

[59] "Geschichte des Schachspiels", II., pp. 202-278.

to the bishop's square [f 1]; and that, in *castling on the queen's side*, the king goes to the bishop's square [c 1] and the rook to the Queen's [d 1], as stated by the Icelandic compiler, who gives the two differing moves of the king in one phrase, and the two differing moves of the rook in another—the grouping being a little awkward, perhaps, but neither incomprehensible nor erroneous—if only a man be sure of his squares and his Icelandic. But Dr. V. d. Linde may, possibly, be allowed to stumble as he pleases whenever he gets to Iceland, for in all the rest of the chess world he is pretty sure of his steps.

Of this "Spilabók"—containing the first printed Icelandic description of the game of chess and how to play it—though very briefly stated, the reader will find in the next few pages an account in German, written for the "Deutsche Schachzeitung," a year or more before Dr. V. d. Linde saw the book. It was from that article, in fact, that Mr. V. d. Lasa knew of the little work's existence. A re-examination, made at the present time, of the Icelandic publication shows us that Dr. V. d. Linde, instead of running a tilt against fancied facts, might have found, by a little more careful research through the tiny pages, real errors quite worthy of his critical metal. He would have ascertained—we take the misstatements in their order—that the compiler makes the "Persians" call this game "Sedrenz" (it should be written in Icelandic *sjatranz*), which he renders by "a hundred difficulties" (*hundrað armæður*) in complete ignorance of the actual origin or significance of the word; that he gives to the rook the alternative name of *fill* (plural *fílar*), "elephant;" that he asserts that some say that the pawns may move two squares at the first move if the player so will (*þó láta sumir þau stökkva yfir einn reit í fyrsta leik ef manni svo sýnist*); that when a pawn has made his way to the eighth rank the player may change it for any piece which he will of those which have been captured (*að sá, sem kemur því upp, velji sjer fyrir það hvern þann mann, sem hann vill, af þeim, sem fallnir eru*); and that he finally sums up several methods of action which some players have the custom of pursuing (*sumir taflmenn hafa þá venju, að láta*), these being: 1. To consider the last man besides the king which a player has, near the close of a game, as uncaptured, unless the other player checkmates at the third or seventh move after taking him; 2. To make the *lalli*—the pawn which has been moved to the eighth rank along the king's file—exempt from capture, like the king himself; 3. To give the king, at his first move, the movement of the knight; and 4. Not to allow an interposed piece either to guard an attacked piece of his own side, or to give check to the opposing king. Let us look, for a moment, at each of these abnormal methods of play:—1. In this obligation of the player having the stronger array to bring the game to an end at a certain move, we may, perhaps see a forerunner of the rule, only of late generally adopted, which compels the player having the superior force to effect mate within fifty moves from a particular stage of the game, or to consent that the game be regarded as drawn. 2. This exemption of a queened pawn from capture has, we believe, never been practised except by these exceptional players of Iceland. 3. The believer in the force of tradition might trace, in this giving the power of the knight to the king at his first move, a faint remembrance of the custom in Lombard chess, which bestowed upon the king, when first moving, the privilege of covering three squares (going from his own square to the third one from it)—which was the germ of the later "castling." 4. As to this idea of not permitting

an interposed piece to exercise its checking power, we may recall the fact that even in Germany they have debated the question: —"Kann ein schachdeckender stein auch ein schachbietender sein?"[60] According to this theory, we take it, the black king might capture a pawn, let us say, even if, by doing so, he apparently moved into check from an interposed or "pinned" piece. In the names of the pieces we observe *filarnir* as synonymous with "the rooks"—the word being a definite form of *fill*=elephant (plural *filar*). It is notable enough to know that this Arabic word in its literal meaning, as applied to an animal, existed already, at a very early day, in the Icelandic vocabulary; and, so far as its signification as a chess-word is concerned, it would indeed be very interesting if only it were cited as an appellation given to the bishop, instead of to the rook, for, except in the very oldest Indian, or ante-Persian, form of the game, the rook was never known anywhere, until in quite recent times, as "elephant;" and such a usage in Icelandic chess practice must have been extremely limited, or have existed only in the mind of the word-monger, borrowed, perhaps, by him from Danish books as an evidence of his learning. But one of the changes which the Indian game is supposed to have undergone at the hands of the Persians was the transfer of the name of "elephant" from the corner-pieces (our rooks) to the pieces which stand beside the king and queen (our bishops). Afterwards the Persian (or quasi-Persian) *pil* was replaced by the cognate Arabic *fil* (elephant), just as it had itself replaced the Sanskrit *hasti*. And this Arabic term for the bishop had a long life, extending through the Spanish *alfil* (=*al*, the Arabic article "the," and *fil*=elephant), Italian *alfino* (now *alfiere*), old French *aufin* (in modern French *fil*, by *volksetymologie*, having become *fou*=fool, another form of *fol*), and Öld-English *alphin*. To continue this digression a little farther—the rare and very modern usage, which occasionally makes the rook an "elephant" is derived from its name in the oft-reprinted and oft-translated Latin poem (1525) of Girolamo Vida (who got the term, as a military expression, from Virgil), who calls it *elephantus turritus*, or "towered elephant." This ultimately led to the adoption of the title of *tower* for the rook in the German, Scandinavian and other idioms (German, *thurm* or *turm*, Danish *taarn*, Dutch *kasteel*, Hungarian *bástya*, modern Greek *purgos* and the alternative English form, *castle*). The influence of Vida's "Schacheis" ("Scacchia Ludus") was so great that in literary chess the term "elephant" for rook (instead of for bishop) also sometimes occurs, and this is the case in Denmark, whence the knowledge of it, as an echo of Vida, found its way into Iceland. Readers of early English chess literature will remember, in this connection, in "The pleasaunt and wittie play of the cheasts" (1562), which is cited under the name of Rowbothum, the phrase, "The rockes some call elephants, carrying towers upon their backes, and men within," the idea of which the author obtained from Vida, and which was repeated in the first English version (1597) of Vida's work in describing the chess-pieces:—[61]

> Here footemen were and horsemen both, archers, some white, some blacke;
> Here elephants that vse to beare a castle on their backe.

—The contents of the third section of the little Icelandic book (3. *Skáktafl*) may be hastily summarized as follows, omitting some matters already referred to:

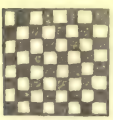
[60] See V. d. Linde's "Geschichte," II., p. 208.

[61] Both these quotations are given in V. d. Linde's "Geschichte," II., p. 181.

—The chess board; the names of the chess-figures; their positions; the law that a white corner square shall be at the right hand of each player; the moves of the chessmen; practice is better than rules; in attacking a king, the player must say *skák!* (check!), and it is usual to do the same thing when attacking the queen; there are three kinds of "check" (or "checkmate" or "game-endings"); 1. Simple check, from which the king escapes, by moving, by interposing a piece or pawn, or by capturing the checking piece; 2. When a king has lost all his men, and is so beset that he cannot move without going into check—this is called *patt* (stalemate); 3. Checkmate (*skák og mát*).—Checkmate by means of a pawn is called *peðráfur*, and is deemed dishonourable to the defeated party; *gleiðarmát* ("straddle-mate") is explained as a marvellous position, in which the mated king is in one corner of the chessboard, and the mating queen and rooks in the other three; and *heimamát* (home-mate) is when the king, still unmoved, is mated on his original square. *Jafntefli* (drawn game) is described, and we are told that the king's pawn (or the king's pawn when queened) is styled *lalli*, while *leppur* signifies "an interposed piece." Then we learn that *valdskák* ("guard-chess") is a mode of chess-play, in which the men protected by other pieces than the king cannot be slain, while in contradistinction to *valdskák* the usual mode of play is known as *drepskák* ("capturing chess"). A roughly-made little woodcut of an empty chess board, scarcely five-eighths of an inch wide, and not too rectangular in outline, adorns page 20.—We note the following chess-expressions (several of which are, however, given elsewhere in the present work); *reitir* (squares); *mennirnir* (the men); *heldri menn* (pieces, as distinguished from pawns); *drepa* (to capture, literally to "slay"); *færa* (to move a piece or pawn); *hrókskipta* (to castle); *hrókskipti* (castling); *leikur* (move); *mótstöðumaður* (opponent); *bera fyrir* (to interpose); *taflmenn* (players).—As the book is now not easily to be found, we reprint the original text of the whole chapter on chess:—

3. Skáktafl.

Skáktaflið er persiskt að uppruna. Nafnið er dregið af persiska orðinu: "Schach" (úttalast: "Sjakk," en við nefnum það "*skák*"), er merkir: konungur. Persar kalla tafl þetta "Sedrenz," þ. e. "hundrað armæður," af því menn þurfa að hugsa mikið um það, og hafa hugann fastan við ýmsar kringumstæður. Við tafl þetta þarf að hafa mikið athygli og heilabrot, og er það skemtileg dægrastytting fyrir þá, sem vel kunna, þareð þeir leggja ekkert í sölurnar nema óánægjuna yfir því að verða unnir, en hafa eins mikla von um að verða svo frægir að vinna.



Menn tefla á svonefndu taflborði, og eru á því 32 hvítir ferhyrntir smáreitir og eins margir svartir.

Myndirnar eða mennirnir, sem teflt er með, eru vanalega úr trje eða fílabeini. Meðal þeirra eru 8 heldri menn, sinn með hverju móti að stærð, nafni og tign, og er gangi þeirra skipað eptir því. Hjá þeim standa 8 minni myndir eða menn, sem kallast *peð*, og er þeim fylkt fyrir framan hina stærri.

Kongurinn er æðstur. Þegar hann er unninn, er taflið úti.

Drottningin eða **Frúin** er bezti maðurinn bæði til að verja eða valda konginn og sækja á fjandmanninn.

Báðir Hrókarnir eða **Fílarnir** ganga frúnni næst að tign.

Báðir Riddararnir eru ágætir liðsmenn til atlögu í byrjun tafls eða þegar fram í sækir.

Báðir Byskuparnir jafngilda hartnær riddurunum og gjöra mest gagn seinast í taflinu.

Peðin eru liðljettust, en geta þó opt orðið að miklu liði, ef þeim er vel og viturlega beitt.

Hinum 8 heldri mönnum er fylkt á yztu reitina á taflborðinu. Svartur kongur er settur á hvítan miðreit og hvítur kongur á svartan, hvít frú á hvítan miðreit og svört á svartan, báðir byskuparnir sinn við hverja hlið kongs og drottningar, báðir riddararnir sinn við hverja hlið byskupanna og báðir hrókarnir á hornreitina. Peðin, sem eru líkt og varnarvirki hinna, eru sett á næstu reitina fyrir framan.

Þannig er hvorutveggju liðinu fylkt, *en þó skal þess ætíð gætt, að hvítur hornreitur sje til hægri handar.*

Kongurinn gengur að eins á næsta reit fram og aptur og til hliðar og á skáreiti, en aldrei lengra en á næsta. Þegar fjandmaður verður fyrir honum, getur hann drepið hann með því að taka þann mann burtu úr taflinu og færa sig á hans reit, ef kringumstæðurnar meina það ekki.

Á meðan ekki er búið að færa konginn og hrókana úr stað, getur maður hrókskipt, þ. e.: skipt um reit við hrókinn með konginum, þannig, að maður setur konginn á riddara eða byskups reit og hrókinn á frúar eða byskups reit, eptir því hvoru megin hrókskipti er, það er að skilja, þegar enginn maður er á milli þeirra, því ekki má kongur eða hrókur stökkva yfir aðra menn.

Frúin gengur eins og kongur og getur hún á öllum gangi farið um þvert og endilangt borðið, þegar enginn maður er fyrir og drepur hún það sem fyrir verður á sama hátt og kongurinn; af þessu má ráða, að frúin er liðbezti maðurinn til að verja eða valda konginn og sækja á fjandmanninn.

Byskuparnir ganga ekki nema á skáreitina. Þeir geta farið svo langt sem vill, ef enginn er fyrir, og drepa þeir eins, ef menn sjá sjer hag í. Af gangi þeirra flýtur, að byskup sá, sem stendur á hvítum reit, kemst aldrei á svartan, og sá, sem er á svörtum reit, aldrei á hvítan.

Riddararnir ganga hvorki beint fram og aptur heldur hliðskakkt á þá reiti, sem eru til hliðar við næstu skáreiti, og geta þannig stokkið yfir aðra menn. Þeir eru því góðir til framgöngu og til að ráðast að konginum og jafnvel máta hann, þareð enginn maður verður borinn fyri þá. Þess vegna er ráðlegast að færa þá sem fyrst fram, því þeir geta betur neytt sín fyrst framan af, en ekki er hægt að máta með tveim riddurum eingöngu seinast í tafli.

Hrókarnir ganga beint fram og aptur og til hliðar, en aldrei á ská, um þvert og endilangt borð, ef ekkert er fyrir þeim, en þá drepa þeir á sama hátt og sagt er um hina mennina. Það er ekki ráðlegt að brúka þá fyr en fram í sækir og töluvert mannfall er orðið.

Peðin ganga að eins beint fram á næsta reit, en aldrei aptur á bak nje til hliðar. Þó láta sumir þau stökkva yfir einn reit í fyrsta leik, ef manni svo sýnist. Þau geta eins og aðrir menn drepið það, sem fyrir verður, en aldrei nema þann mann, sem stendur á næsta skáreit. Ef maður kemur peði upp í borðið hjá hinum, eru það rjettust skáklög, að sá, sem kemur því upp, velji sjer fyrir það hvern þann mann, sem hann vill af þeim, sem fallnir eru, og stendur þá sá maður á sama reit og peð kemur upp á.

Það er ekki hægt að gefa reglur fyrir því, hvernig maður á að tefla, þar það er komið undir hugþótta þess, er teflir, og æfingin ein getur kennt það bezt.

Beztu skákmenn eru þeir, sem sækja mest á og reyna til að kreppa þannig að kongi mótstöðumanns síns, að hann geti ekki bætt úr skák, því þá er hann mát.

Þegar einhver maður stefnir þannig á konginn, að hann eptir gangi sínum getur drepið hann, ef hann væri ekki ætíð ódræpur, segir maður: *skák!* af lotningu fyrir konginum til að láta mótstöðumann sinn vita, að kongi hans sje hætta búin, svo hann geti borið menn fyrir sig eða flúið. Eins er það venja að segja til, ef maður setur á frúna, svo hinn geti forðað henni, ef það er hægt.

Það er til þrenns konar skák:

1. Einföld skák, þegar bætt verður úr með því að færa konginn, bera mann fyrir eða drepa þann mann, sem skákað er með.

2. Þegar annarhvor konganna er búinn að missa alla menn sína og búið er að kreppa svo að honum á alla vegu, að hann getur ekki komist úr stað nema ofan í skák. Þetta kalla menn að verða eða gjöra *patt*. Þegar svo stendur á, er taflið úti, og sá, sem verður patt, tapar þá ekki nema helmingi af því, sem kann að vera teflt um.

3. *Skák og mát*, þegar skákin er svo löguð, að kongurinn hvorki getur flúið, borið fyrir sig nje drepið nema ofan í skák, og þá er búið. Sá maður, sem borinn er fyrir til að bæta úr skák, er kallaður leppur.

Þegar mátað er með peði, kalla menn það *peðrif*, og þykir smánarlegt. Þegar kongurinn stendur í einhverju horninu og frúin og hrókarnir verða þannig færðir að konginum með því að segja skák og mát í hverjum leik, að hrókarnir standa hvor í sínu horni út frá konginum og frúin í þriðja horninu, heitir það *gleiðarmát*, og þykir verra en hitt. En smánarlegast allra þykir hið svonefnda *heimamát*, þegar kongur er mátaður heima í borðinu áður en hann hefur fært sig um reit.

Þegar svo er fallið hjá báðum, að ekki er hægt að máta, heitir það *jafntefli*.

Sumir taflmenn hafa þá venju, að láta seinasta mann, er kongurinn hefur, vera ódræpan, nema maður þá máti í þriðja eða sjöunda leik eptir að maður hefur drepið hann. Eins láta sumir *lallann*—peð, sem maður kemur upp í borð á kongsreit—vera ódræpan eins og kong, konginn ganga riddaragang í fyrsta sinni, og láta *leppinn* hvorki geta valdað annann mann nje skákað kongi.

Sumir tefla þannig, að aldrei sje drepinn maður, þegar hann er valdaður af öðrum manni en konginum. Það kallast *valdskák*, eins og menn til aðgreiningar nefna hinn taflsmátann *drepskák*.

Um þessi áminnstu atriði um taflslögin verða menn að koma sjer saman áður en taflið byrjar, þareð opt er undir því komið hverjum lögum fylgt er, hvort maður vinnur.

A Grímsey Legend.

There comes from Iceland a story—said to be a common one in the schools of that country—about a native of the tiny isle of Grímsey, which lies directly under the Polar circle just off the northern coast of the larger island. In the summer there are few that traverse the sixty miles of silent sea which separate it from the mainland, and in the winter the stormy winds

and the turbulent waters shut it wholly out from the world. For the few families who live on the rocks and earn their subsistence by gathering the feathers of the birds that haunt the precipitous cliffs, and by fishing in the surrounding seas, has been provided a small church, over which the poorest-paid pastor in Iceland presides. The ancestors of these families came to the solitary spot, to escape the consequences of a feud, just after the days when chess had made its way from England to Iceland. It is a widespread belief, in Iceland, that the exiles have always found the game a great solace in their isolation, and that many of their number have attained great skill in its practice. Our story says that a fourteen year old boy once came with his father, from their home on the lonely isle, to visit the episcopal seat of Hólar in North Iceland—in one of those good old years when Hólar still had its bishops, who, with their brother-prelates of the Southern see of Skálholt, were the great dignitaries of Thule. The lad had never been outside of Grímsey before; his manners were consequently rough, and respect for the grandees of the world had not been one of the habits he had acquired. But one thing he had learned, and that was chess. While the two stood, with others, in the court of the bishop's house, the prelate himself passed through, and all doffed their hats except the boy. Being reproved by one of the bystanders, he asked: "Who then was that man?" "The bishop, you fool, the biggest priest in Iceland." "Oh, the bishop, does he play chess well? But of course, he does, for our parson is the second-best player in Grímsey," said the boy. This remark was reported to the bishop, who sent for the young son of Grímsey. "What was it that you asked in the court?" enquired the dignitary. "I only asked one of your people if you played a good game of chess; for if you do, I should like to try one with you." It happened that the bishop was not only an excellent chess player, but also rather proud of his superiority to others. Amused at the boldness of the insular Tristram, he ordered the chessboard to be brought and to his astonishment speedily succumbed, in three straight games, to his young opponent. "Where did you learn your chess, boy?" demanded the beaten bishop, who in no wise took his defeat with episcopal serenity. "From my father and his people in Grímsey, for in the winter we play from early in the morning till late at night." "I should rather say," exclaimed the humiliated bishop, "that you learned it from the devil, and that you have been neglecting your prayers." "Why, if that be the case, I should be quite able to beat the fellow you mention, since I can beat the parson, and the parson, who is very good and pious, can beat anybody else." The bishop regained his good humor at the lad's reply, invited him to remain at Hólar, and, finding him clever at other things besides chess, put him into the cathedral school. Later in life, he received a living, and became, like his own parson, a good and pious priest—quite able to withstand the assaults of the great adversary.

Tables and Hnefatafl.[62]

Tafl.—Throughout the whole of western Europe, during a period beginning at a date at least as early as the tenth century, there was played, particularly by the higher classes, a household game, the European name of

[62] The matter which is given under this rubric is, in every respect, unsatisfactory. To make it at all valuable would demand far more time and research than the writer has been

which was derived from the Latin word, *tabula*, which is likewise the source of our common English vocable, "table." The amusement was thus called, of course, because, in order to play it, a "table," "board," or other flat surface, was, first of all, necessary. The name usually assumed the plural form, indicating that this "table" was divided, either literally or by painted divisional lines, into two, that is, into two parts. In Italy this diversion was styled *tavole*; in France and England *tables*; in Spain *tablas*; in Portugal (supposedly) *tabolas*; in Germany *zabel(spiel)*; in Iceland *tafl* (the *f*, as has already been stated, pronounced like *b*); and in Denmark *tavl*.[63] In Anglo-Saxon it occurs as *tæfel*, having an allied verb *tæflan*, "to play (at tables)" (like the Icelandic verb *tefla*, of the same origin), and the compound *tæfelstan* (literally, "table-stone"), signifying a "man (or piece) at tables." In Gælic, as would appear, it was known as *taibhleas*, and in Welsh as *tawlbrwdd*—the last element the equivalent of the English "board." But there is no need of continuing this list; it is sufficient to say that this *ludus tabularum* penetrated into all the countries of the extreme Occident. The domain, however, in which it was especially well-known, at the time of the revival of letters, was the region which included the Italian and Spanish peninsulas, France, and the islands of Great Britain and Iceland, or, in other words, the very tract over which chess spread with such comparative rapidity, after it had once passed from the old Moorish to the Christian provinces of Spain. We hear less of it, in those early centuries, in the lands of the Continent to the east and north of the Rhine, but that is no doubt owing to the later-developed culture and literature of those parts.

Abundant as are the allusions to the game in both the poetical and prose literatures of the Middle Ages, so little has been written in regard to its character and story that there have been few attempts to evolve any theory as to its birth-place or birth-time. The citation of it in Anglo-Saxon writings proper—in which, of course, there is no authentic mention of chess—would indicate that it preceded chess as a European game. Indeed, there are some obscure allusions—in what literature survives from those ages of obscurity that followed the close of the Roman period, which may possibly refer to tables; and which might almost incline us to believe that the peninsula of Italy was its first European home. We know that the use of dice was considered essential in playing the game, and dice, even under their modern name, certainly go back to the time indicated—not to speak of the fact that, under a different appellation, they were an important feature in certain ancient Roman games. For the etymologists are pretty well agreed that from the low-Latin *dadus* (a corrupted form of the classic participle

able to devote to it. The story of nard-tables-backgammon (if, indeed, we have the right to use that composite title) is full of tantalizing problems awaiting solution; while an adequate reply to the question, "What was *hnefatafl*?" can only be given by one who is content to delve diligently in many fields, especially, perhaps, in the Celtic. Of the pages which immediately follow this note none but those which attempt to narrate in brief the probable evolution of the game of draughts contain anything which can be regarded as novel.

[63] The word "tables" (perhaps by reason of its plural form) might come, sooner or later, to be sometimes employed, by uninformed writers, generically—to signify all household games played on a table or board, with pieces or figures—that is, which were table-games, or what the Germans mean by *brettspiele*. In this sense it would naturally include chess, and thus give rise to some confusion, not very marked, however, except in the case of the Icelandic form *tafl* (plural *töfl*), as we shall note hereafter.

datus = "given," then "thrown") the words *dado* (Italian), *dé* (French) and *die* (English) are most probably descended. But, however far back it may date, the game of tables certainly makes a frequent appearence, especially in the Italian, French and English literatures, from before Boccaccio until after Shakespeare, and is often so introduced as to show that the writer draws a marked line of distinction between it and chess. A multitude of such passages are familiar to the chess investigator, and we shall not attempt to cite them all.

We begin with French mediæval productions, in which, as Strohmeyer[64] has observed, the games of chess and tables are often coupled together, implying that both were favorites at court and castle. In the "Chanson de Roland"—the work of a Norman trouvère of the eleventh century—we are told that

> Sur palies blancs siedent cil chevalier
> As *tables* juent pur els esbaneier
> E as *eschacs* li plus saive e li vieill,

—the idea here expressed that chess was better adapted to the wiser and elder members of courtly society being of not uncommon occurrence.[65] It is found again, for instance, in the poetical romance, of the "Comte de Poitiers:"

> Li un juent à l' escremir
> A l' entre deux, por miex ferir;
> As *tables* li conte palès,
> *Li viel et li sage as escès.*[66]

The so-called ten-syllable "Geste d'Alexandre"—pretty surely of the twelfth century—has a passage describing the slaying of a terrible and savage beast, with a hide so huge that a hundred knights could repose on it "et se juent as *tables*, as eschés et as dés" ("and play at tables and chess and dice").[67] In that vast metrical production of the thirteenth century, the "Roman de la Rose," ascribed to Guillaume de Lorris and Jean de Meung, and begun before 1260, we are again told:

> De gieuz de dez, d' eschez, de *tables*,[68]

where, as elsewhere, the mention of dice, apart from tables, is warranted by their employment in other ways than in connection with that diversion.

[64] The essay of Dr. Fritz Strohmeyer, "Das schachspiel im Altfranzösischen," forms a part of the volume of "Abhandlungen" dedicated by his disciples—all scholars of note—"Herrn prof. dr. Tobler zur feier seiner fünfundzwanzigjährigen thätigkeit als ordentlicher professor an der universität Berlin" (Halle a. S. 1895), in which the essay with which we are concerned fills pages 381-403. It is, of course, altogether invaluable as regards the game of chess, and incidentally is of much interest for the story of tables as well during the period treated. But a special paper on the latter game, equally thorough, equally acute, would be a great boon to investigators. The other countries of the west are all fields—untilled, or comparatively untilled, so far as chess, and tables, likewise, are concerned—demanding labourers as skillful and untiring as Dr. Strohmeyer.

[65] Chanson de Roland (ed. Michel, Paris 1837), viii, l. 16-17, p. 5; and ed. Gautier, 15e ed. (Tours 1884), v. 110-112.

[66] "Roman du Comte de Poitiers" (ed. Michel, Paris 1831), p. 57.

[67] Bartsch, "La langue et la littérature françaises" (Paris 1887), p. 212, l. 14-21 (according to Dr. Strohmeyer), or in "Li Romans d' Alexandre" (ed. Michelant, Stuttgart 1846), v. 31 ff., p. 292.

[68] "Roman de la Rose" (ed. Michel, Paris 1864), p. 335.

The writer probably refers to what used to be called the "casting of *mains*,"[69] being, very likely, the same as *la mine* which greatly puzzles Dr. Van der Linde in his "Geschichte" (II, pp. 159-160). "Throwing of *mains*" as a game, we hear of at fashionable Bath as late as the year 1700.[70] Provençal literature, in the romance of "Gerard de Rouissillon," affords almost the same phrase: "D' eschays sab e de *taulas*, des joxs de datz," also, as we see, including the dice.[71] Similarly, it is said of Duke Robert of Normandy, father of William the Conqueror,

> De seeir au jeu volontiers
> Esteit li dux tot costumers;
> *Tables* amout, eschès e dez,[72]

with which Strohmeyer compares a like expression from the "Roman de Rou" of Robert Wace:

> Richart sout en dancis [*i. e.* Icelandic] e en normant parler....
> L' altrui sout e le suen bien prendre e duner,
> Une chartre sout lire e les parz deviser.
> Li pere l' out bien fait e duire e doctriner:
> D' esches sout e des *tables* sun compaignun mater, [*i. e.* mate].

This is not the only time that, for the sake of rime or through ignorance, these minstrels talk of mating at the game of tables (as well as at chess). Nor is this the only passage in the "Roman de Rou" which alludes to tables. In the second volume of the same edition we find these four lines, the beginning of an anecdote:

> Li dues ama gieus conuenables.
> Deduit d' esches, gaain de *tables*.
> Vn iur se seeit al *tablier*,
> Entre lui e un cheualier

the story terminating, some forty-five verses later, with another mention of the "tablier" or table-board:

> Li dues fist le cors remuer
> E le *tablier* roua oster.[73]

These lines are likewise cited by Madden, in his "Historical remarks on the introduction of the game of chess into Europe" (1832, p. 283), from a British Museum MS of Robert Wace's metrical romance. In the somewhat later "Fierabras" (though far earlier than its earliest fourteenth century MS—

[69] Main, in this sense, is the ordinary French "*main*" (= hand), and is used here, like the corresponding English word, as a technical gaming term, like a "hand at cards," "a good whist hand," and so on. A "main," in Anglo-French is a "hand at dice," and the "throwing of mains" is casting dice to see which thrower will make the better or winning "hand." The word is not to be confounded with *meyne*, which occurs in early English phrases relating to chess, and perhaps to other games, in the sense of "men" (pieces).

[70] Ashton's "Social life in the reign of Queen Anne" (London 1882), II. p. 111—quoting from an old pamphlet, the title of which we give later.

[71] "Giratz de Rossilho" (ed. Konrad Hoffmann, Berlin 1855), v. 4282 ff.; see likewise "Girard de Roussilon" (transl. de Meyer, Paris 1884), section 321.

[72] Benoît, "Chroniques des ducs de Normandie," v. 115 35-8.

[73] "Roman de Rou [=Rolf]" of Wace (ed. Hugo Andresen, Heilbronn 1879), I., p. 103, lines 1762 ff. and II., pp. 123-5 lines 2339-42 and 2386-7.

going back probably to nearly or quite the twelfth century) we are told of some of the paladins that

> Li pluiseur vont as *tables* et as esciés juer, [74]

while that other chanson de geste, "Parise la duchesse," which is from the thirteenth century, says of Hugo, the son of Parise:

> Puis aprist il as *tables* et à eschas joer
> Il n'a home en cest monde qui l'en péust mater, [75]

—mating (mater) again applying, if we take the sense literally, both to tables and chess. Dr. Strohmeyer has another passage of the same character from the romance of "Aiol et Mirabel" (a tale having a quasi connection with the Icelandic "Elis saga"), which is almost unique in this romantic literature in condemning the practice of the game of chess; "as eskies ne as *tables,* fieus, ne juès," [76] being the advice of a father in taking leave of his son. From a British Museum MS of the "Roman de Tristan" (reg. B. A. xviii, f. 190 b.)—the original of the Icelandic Tristrams saga—is quoted by Massmann, in his "Geschichte des mittelalterlichen schachspiels" (1839, p. 61), a phrase in which it is stated of the hero that: "il sceut tant des eschez et des *tables* que nul ne l'en peult macter [=mate]." Bartsch, in his already cited "Langue et littérature françaises," extracts from the story of the sexually transformed Blancandin the following triplet:

> Li latimiers par fu tant sages
> Que bien l'aprist de tos langages
> D'eskes, des *tables* et des des, [77]

in which we again have the dice as a third amusement. Of passages in which chess is not mentioned we have an example in the old Belgian chronicle by J. d'Outremeuse, styled, we believe, the "Myreur des histors" (I. p. 351), where we are informed that "Toudis prendoit delectation au jeux de *taubles*," (where it would appear from the form "jeux," as if the word were used generically). Ducange, in his great lexicological work (sub *tabula*), refers to a Latin document dated 1345—originating in France and seemingly theological in character—in which the canonical view of playing

[74] Romance of "Fierabras" (publ. by Kroeber and Servois, Paris 1860), p. 88; and in the earlier edition (ed. Guessard, Paris 1860), also p. 88, line 2900.

[75] "Parise la duchesse, chanson de geste" (2e éd., by F. Guessard and L. Larchey, Paris 1860), l. 966-7, p. 30.

[76] "Aiol et Mirabel und Elie de St. Gille" (ed. W. Förster, Heilbronn 1876-82), v. 165-8. Dr. Strohmeyer, in a foot-note referring to this excerpt, states that in Löseth's critical analysis of "Le Roman en prose de Tristan" (Paris 1891), section 481, there is an estimate of Tristan as a chessplayer, but on examining Löseth's work (pp. 333-334) we find that the estimate is made in two lines. Tristan and his companion, Brunor—the former incognito—have been talking about various things. "Puis la conversation," says Löseth, continuing his summary, "tourne sur l'escrime et le jeu d'échecs, et l'un et l'autre se disent passés maitres dans ces deux nobles arts."

[77] This will be found in Bartsch, p. 570; Dr. Strohmeyer refers to "Blancandin" (publ. by Michelant, Paris 1867), v. 33 ff. "Blancandin" is an episode of that long poem of adventure, "Tristan de Nanteuil"—which has nothing to do with the lover of Iseult, the hero of the "Tristrams saga," although both bear in French the same name.—An interesting note on the providential "desexing" of Blancandine (who thus becomes grammatically "Blancandin") will be found in Kristofer Nyrop's "Storia dell' epopea francese" (transl. by Egidio Goria, Torino 1888), p. 171.

at games is set forth: "Non possit, nec debeat ludere.... ad aliquot ludum taxillorum, excepto ad scacchos et ad *tabulas*" — an immunity not always accorded to tables, but frequently granted to chess.

In early English the game of tables plays nearly as important a rôle as in early French — during those days when there were Norman courts on both sides of the Channel, and while much of the old Norman spirit and taste still remained. As has already been observed, chess could hardly have been mentioned in Anglo-Saxon writings — certainly not until the years immediately preceding and during the transition to the modern idiom — the period which used to be styled "Semi-Saxon." But it is only necessary to consult the dictionary of Bosworth and Toller (Oxford 1882),[78] to learn that, on the other hand, tables was popular enough when the old dialect was still spoken. As usual among the lexicologists the rubric *tæfel* exhibits a lack of technical research — the compilers giving up the task of investigation at the outset, saying: "What was the precise nature of the games, to which this word and related forms are applied, does not appear; some of the references below imply that games of chance are meant" — and then Tacitus and the Germanic love of gaming are lugged in, in close imitation of Guðbrandur Vigfússon, whose classic allusion we have already cited. The most important Anglo-Saxon references are those to the well-known Exeter MS (Codex Exoniensis), a collection of Anglo-Saxon verse given to the library of Exe-

[78] This revised edition of the old, and, for its day, invaluable Bosworth of 1838, also remarks sub voce "tæfel" that "In Icelandic, *tafl* is used of chess or draughts;" this is not correct, for however it may stand with chess, it is certain that the Icelandic *tafl* was never employed with the meaning of draughts. Nor can the closing statement of the same sentence, "the Danes in England seem to have played chess," be verified. This latter error is akin to one made by Brand in his "Popular antiquities of Great Britain" (London 1849, II. p. 353): — "The chequers, at this time [about 1609] a common sign of a public-house, was originally intended, I should suppose, for a kind of draught-board, called tables, and showed that there that game might be played." Of course, there is no such relationship as is here implied between the games of "tables" and "chequers" or "draughts" — as will hereafter be more fully noted. — A technical word cited by the new Bosworth — from a gloss — is "cynningstan on tæfle, *pirgus*." This "conning-piece," as the later authorities explain it, was a device to preclude deception by the dice-thrower. The definition *pirgus* (or *pyrgus*) is the Greek πύργος (tower, burg) in a Latinized form, having the sense of the pure Latin *fritillum* (dice-box), and was so used on account of the tower-like shape of the dice-box (for casting). Among the Greeks themselves this word apparently never had any such technical meaning, indicating that the dice-box was unknown to that people. The "cynningstan," as we are led to infer by the Anglo-Saxon lexicologists, was so constructed, or placed, that the thrower could, by no trick of hand, decide the result — the word really signifying the "knowing-piece," or the piece which makes something known. This instrument is described — in his note on Roman dice — by Stewart Culin, in his remarkable and unique work "Chess and playing-cards" (Washington 1898, p. 832), thus: "In order to prevent cheating, dice were cast into conical beakers (*pyrgus*, *turricula*), the interior of which were formed into steps" — down which it was expected that the dice would tumble and their movements thus be heard after they could no longer be controlled, in any way, by the thrower. This would seem to imply that the "cynningstan" stood on or near the board — although the phrase, *on tæfle* in the original gloss, would probably be best rendered by "at tables," that is, a piece or instrument at the game of tables, as we say, "the rook (is a piece) at chess." Culin goes on to note that "A parallel to this [usage of the Romans] is found in the Siamese back-gammon, *saka*, where the dice are thrown into the *krabok*." All this however, appears to be capable of a simpler interpretation. Dice are still sometimes cast by hand, each thrower taking the two or three dice in his hand and then, by a motion of the arm, letting them fall out — promiscuously, as one might say — upon any flat surface. This is usually done while standing, the dice falling upon a counter or table. Quite likely this was originally the ancient method of throwing dice at tables (or similar dice-employing games), illustrations in

ter Cathedral by the city's first bishop, Leofric, and in which it is still preserved. It has been edited by Thorpe (1842), and again, in part, by Gollancz (1895).[79] Among the excerpts drawn, with varying orthography, from this anthology, in lexicons and elsewhere, are

Sumbiδ hrœd-tæfle,
Sumbiδ gewittig.

the first line of which Gollancz renders "One is expert at dice;" "Dryten dælep sumum *tæfle crœft*" ("skill at tables," Thorpe, p. 311); and thereafter:

Hy twegen sceolon
Tæfle ymsittan

("these two shall at tables sit," p. 345). Four or five lines farther on we find the expression *hond tæflesmonnes* ("the hand of the player at tables"). The only other recent Anglo-Saxon lexicological work—due to English scholarship—beside the two editions of Bosworth, is Street's "Student's dictionary of Anglo-Saxon" (Oxford 1897)—an unpretentious, but, in many respects, useful work. The compiler, however, repeats the old blunder of connecting *tæfel* with chess, and like his predecessor gives three significations to the primitive noun, namely: a game; a die; and a man, or piece. He has, likewise, the derivatives *tæflan* (*tæflian*), "to gamble" (or rather, if we are not mistaken, "to play at tables"); *tæflere* ("player"); *tæflung* ("playing"), and the adjective *tæfle* ("fond of playing tables"). The only compound is *tæfelstan*, rendered "die, or piece used in game"—which is even more unsatisfactory, than anything that precedes it. The larger dictionaries cite instances of the use of *tæfel* (and its derivatives) from vocabularies or glossaries—earlier and later—like that compiled by the abbot Ælfric, styled the grammarian, who flourished not far from the year 1000—a generation or more before bishop Leofric. On the whole, from a very superficial examination of the more accessible sources, one gets the idea that the game of tables was pretty well known in England during the tenth century, and possibly even before—which is a good deal more than two hundred years earlier than we hear authoritatively of any chess-playing in that region.

old codices strengthening this supposition. In the course of time it would be found that knavish-minded people acquired the knack of causing the dice to lie as they wished by an adroit use of their fingers—a sort of literal prestidigitation. Then, as a remedy or safeguard against this, would be invented the dice-box, as we now know it, in which the thrower had to shake the dice so that the rattling could be heard before casting them; it was of such a form too, that there was little chance of digital tricks; and it was also tower-shaped. This looks very much like the kernel of the matter, in which case all the rest of the story and comment would be largely a myth evolved by the lexicographers.—The throwing of the dice was an important action in all kinds of gaming into which dice entered; hence, in one of the Celtic idioms at least, a verb meaning "to throw or cast" appears, if we may believe the dictionary-makers, to have been formed out of the Latin *tabula*, from its sense as the appellation of a dice-game. The dictionaries likewise say that the Anglo-Saxon *tæfel* sometimes had the meaning "die" or "dice." But, as we have hinted, such statements must be received with due caution since they may well result from the lack of technical knowledge on the part of the compiler. When we see an indefinite definition like this: "a die or piece in a game," we may generally assume that the writer knows nothing about the game of which he is speaking—and such definitions are very frequent.

[79] Thorpe's edition (like all his work) was excellent for its time; that of Gollancz has remained unfinished for half a decade.

Earliest, perhaps, of all the occurrences of the word "tables," in what may be looked upon as English literature proper, is that in the celebrated rhymed legendary story of Britain known as the "Brut," from the mythical "Brutus the Trojan" (the fabled founder of the newer Troy, which is London), whose name, in the crude philology of that age, was connected with the word "Briton." This production is commonly regarded as "the first great piece of literature in Transition English." Great it certainly is, if measured by the number of its verses, which are upwards of thirty thousand —those early bards being truly epic in their fertility. Layamon's[80] "Brut," as it is termed from the name of its writer, is a version of the Anglo-Norman "Roman de Brut,"—by that Jersey poet whom we have just quoted and who is usually designated as Robert Wace—which was itself a versified paraphrase of the Latin "Historia Britonum" of Geoffrey of Monmouth. Layamon composed his poem, as it would seem, not long subsequent to 1200. The second or later of the two differing forms in which it has come down to us, can hardly be more recent than the fourth decade of the century. It was printed by Sir Frederic Madden in an edition of high merit.[81] The reference to "tables" occurs in verse 8133, which reads in the earlier MS:

Summen pleoden on *tœuelbrede*,

while, in the later, the last two words become *mid tauel*, that is, "Some played at the tableboard (at tables)." This, it must be remembered, is a generation, or a generation and a half, subsequent to the first known mention of chess in Great Britain by Alexander Neckham (1180), and chess must have by now got to be pretty well acclimatized, side by side with tables, in the courts, castles, cloisters and schools of England, and even among the well-to-do burghers of the great cities. Next in time comes the romance of "Sir Tristrem," with which we have had already something to do in the earlier pages of this volume. It was doubtless in existence before the close of the last quarter of the thirteenth century. In it occurs, as will be recalled, the usual coupling of tables and chess (verse 1277):

His harp, his croude was rike,
His *tables*, his chess he bare.[82]

Contemporary with the author of "Sir Tristrem" was Robert of Gloucester, who ceased to write before the following century began. The work of which he is the reputed composer was a rhymed chronicle of England somewhat like the "Brut," and like numerous other histories in verse produced in the

[80] Layamon is an instance of the derivation of a personal name from the official title. The word is identical with the familiar Icelandic *lögmaður* ("lawman"). The poet doubtless filled the position of a judge, or justice of the peace, or possibly sheriff.

[81] Published by the Royal Society of Antiquaries, London 1847, in 3 volumes, following the same society's text (by Thorpe) of the Exeter Anglo-Saxon codex.

[82] We have heretofore cited the noted edition of Walter Scott, but the latest treatments of the text by that master of English and Icelandic, Eugen Kölbing, (Heilbronn 1882), and by G. P. McNeill (Scottish Text Society, Edinburgh 1886) are of course characterized by more modern philological methods. Mr. McNeill follows Scott in ascribing the authorship of the poem to Thomas of Erceldoune (about 1270).

lands of the Occident in that period of awakening. In it he makes Arthur's knights amuse themselves

Wyþ pleyinge at *tables* oþer atte chekere [chessboard]. [83]

But another historical writer—"for many years that central figure of English learning," as Stubbs styles him—John of Salisbury, has a much earlier allusion to the game under the name of *tabula* (singular). He wrote in Latin, and, besides his historical and biographical productions, indited a treatise called the "Polycraticus," in which he attacks the vices of the court, and it is in this—in a list of ten games then prevalent—that his allusion to tables is to be found. The "Polycraticus" was completed before 1159. [84] Of somewhat uncertain date is our next work, "Guy of Warwick" the most popular of all the old English metrical tales. The passage referring to tables (as so often, with an accompanying mention of chess also) begins with line 3175 of the codex known as the Auchinleck MS: [85]

Into þe chaumber go we baye,
Among þe maidens for the playe;
At *tables* to playe, & at ches,

the citation preceding a description of a chess-game. In another MS (verse 3039 ff.) we have the lines given as follows:

Go we now to chaumber same
On some maner to make vs game
To the chesses or to the *tables*.

The great dictionary of Dr. Murray and his associates quotes from the "Cursor Mundi," which is a collection of homilies in rhyme ascribed to 1300, a fragmentary passage: "I ha ne liked.... til idel games, chess and *tables*." [86] The Oxford dictionary accompanies it by a similar citation from the "Handling Sin," a rhymed version (finished about 1328), made by Robert of Brunne (or Robert Manning), of the "Manuel des Peschiez" [péchés], a French work by an English writer, William of Waddington. The stories—sermon-like in character—are not dissimilar to those which a greater pen afterwards told in the "Canterbury Tales." The excerpt is

Take furþe the chesse or þe *tables*. [87]

The chief prose production which remains to us from this dawning period of our early literature is that morality (or, as some one has called it "divinity"), the "Ayenbite of Inwyt" (*i. e.* the "Remorse of Conscience"), a translation into Kentish English by a Canterbury friar, Dan Michel (a native of Norgate, Kent), of "Le somme des Vices et des Vertus," which was written, it is said, for the use of the French King Philip III, by another friar, Frère Lorens (Laurentius Gallicus). The sentence, as given by Mur-

[83] The passage is cited by Mätzner, "Altenglische sprachproben," I. 1, p. 245 (foot-notes).

[84] The complete works of John of Salisbury have been edited by J. A. Giles (Oxford 1848).

[85] This was the MS used by Zupitza, and the quotation will be found in his "Romance of Guy of Warwick," edited for the Early Text Society (London 1883), I. p. 184.

[86] Edited by Morris for the Early English Text Society.

[87] The "Handling Syne" was edited by Furnivall for the Roxburghe Club in 1862.

ray,[88] is "Kueade [Wicked] gemenes [games], ase byeþ þe gemenes of des and of *tables*," in which the author seems to exclude chess from the games which he regards as sinful. But in a later place he utters himself in a different spirit: "Me deþ manye kueades ase playe ate ches oþer ate *tables*." In the latter half of the 14th century, as is supposed, was composed the vast "Gest historiale of the destruction of Troy," its fourteen thousand verses made up from the popular "Historia Trojana" of Guido Colonna, who again is said to have stolen his compilation from the writings of the chronicler Benoît, whom we have previously mentioned. But what the unknown English rhymester says is as follows (the dialect is North English):

> Mony gaumes were begonnen þe grete for to solas.
> The chekker was choisly þere chosen þe first,
> The draghtes, the dyse, and other dregh [tedious] gaumes,
> The *tables*, the top, tregetre also....[89]

where the author seems, like various writers we have cited, to set chess above other board-games, and to likewise exempt it from the charge of tediousness, which he makes against draughts and tables. But without continuing our researches among the English writers of these pioneer centuries we come down to Chaucer, who, in one of his earliest poems, the "Book of the Duchess" (line 51), says:

> For me thoghte it better play
> Than playe either at chesse or *tables*:

and again in the "Franklin's Tale"—one of the Canterbury stories—the poet has

> They dauncen and they playen
> At ches and *tables*.[90]

A writer on life in the 16th century [91] has a mention of tables drawn from some family archives, which is noteworthy because the board, owing to its division into two parts, is spoken of as "a pair." The original orthography is here preserved—the omission of the word *of* being evidently only accidental: "Willim Jones proveth Mr. Darell and my ladye to sett ij or iij hours together divers times in the dyning chamber at ffarley with a pair [of] *tables* between them, never playing, but leaning over the table and talking together." The second word *table*, used in the singular, apparently refers to the "table" upon which the board for playing "tables" was placed. There is a quaint volume, of the same period, in which the writer makes a character say: "Well; now, I perceiue by you, that table-playing and chess-playing may be vsed of any man, soberly and moderately." [92]

[88] See the edition of Dan Michel's "Ayenbite" by Morris (London 1866), p. 45, and for the other passage, p. 52.

[89] See the edition of this bulky production made for the Early English Text Society by Panton and Donaldson (London 1869-74), p. 54.

[90] It is in this tale that Chaucer indicates a certain amount of knowledge of Alfonso the Wise, the one royal writer on chess. He alludes to the "tables Tolletanes" (that is, "tables of Toledo"), which were astronomical tables by the wise Spanish king, who left his mark on the mediæval science of star-gazing, as on so many other things.

[91] See Hubert Hall's "Society in the Elizabethan Age" (London 1886, app. ii, Darrell Papers).

[92] The rev. John Northbrooke's "Treatise on dicing, dauncing, vain playe" &c. (London 1576). The book was several times reprinted, the edition of 1579 having a more explicit

Shakspeare, in whom technical blunders are rare, shows that he was familiar with the mode of playing tables, when he sarcastically says of Boyet

> This is the ape of form, monsieur the nice,
> That when he plays at *tables*, chides the dice
> In honourable terms. [93]

Here the dramatist properly uses dice in the plural (as two, or three, were employed at tables). In the "Winter's Tale" (iv. 3) he has both (die and dice), the singular form being of very rare occurrence in any earlier writer. The citation we have given is a sufficient indication that "tables," as the name of a game, was still well understood in the closing years of the 16th century. In the very first year of the 17th, was issued a satirical tract in verse, "Letting of humours blood," a passage from which is reproduced by Thomas Wright in an essay of which we shall soon have more to say, as follows:

> An honest vicker, and a kind consort,
> That to the alehouse friendly would resort,
> To have a game at *tables* now and than,
> Or drinke his pot as soone as any man.

Thomas Dekker, the dramatist and satirist, has at least two references to the game, under its old appellation, during the first quarter of the century. The name even lingered here and there to a much later period. Two generations after Skakspeare's employment of it, the diarist, Pepys (1665), could write:—"I walked.... to my Lord Brouncker's, and there staid awhile, they being at *tables*;" but in a sixpenny pamphlet entitled: "A step to the Bath with a character of the place," printed anonymously a generation later (in 1700), which is, however, supposed to be the work of Ward, one of the social heroes of the once so fashionable English watering-place on the Severn, and from which we have already indirectly quoted, there occurs a list of names of games:—"From hence we went to the "Groom Porters," where they were a-labouring like so many anchor-smiths, at the *oaks*, *back-gammon*, *tick-tack*, *Irish*, *basset* and *throwing of mains*." Here we have both "back-gammon" and "tick-tack," but "tables" was evidently growing obsolete. [94] The two most modern instances to be found of the use of "tables" are interesting as containing the technical-term "back-game." The first is in the "Non-Juror" (1716) of the dramatist, Colley Cibber:—"A coquett's play with a serious lover, is like a back-game at *tables*, all open at first;" and the second is in Mrs. Barbauld's letters of Richardson (published in 1804, but the passage dates from 1753): "I must now, as they say at *tables*, endeavor to play a good back-game." [95] After this, so far as written evidence is concerned, the word *tables*, as the title of a game, passes out of the domain of current English speech. Possibly the earliest published work which plainly

title: "A treatise wherein dicing, daunсing, vaine plaies or enterludes, with other pastimes &c. commonly vsed one [= on] the sabbath daies, are by the worde of God and auncient writers reproued." The author styles himself "minister and preacher of the worde of God," and all his publications bear the same motto on the title-page: "Spiritus est vicarius Christi in terra."

[93] "Love's labor lost," act v., sc. 2.

[94] See the citation of Ashton's "Social life," p. 72, with an allusion to "throwing of mains."

[95] "Correspondence of Samuel Richardson" (London 1804), III., p. 68.

indicates the beginning of the period of exclusion is Cotgrave's French-English dictionary, which was first issued in 1611 and lastly in 1673. He uses the English terms "backgammon" and "trictrac," but ignores "tables," although he employs the French word more than once, even giving a variety of the French "tables," known as "tables rabbatues," which he renders by "the Queen's game, doublets." The very oldest lexicographical appearence of the game "tables" is, perhaps, in a vocabulary dating back to the early days of the 15th century, which is preserved in the British Museum. Among the English name of games (*nomina ludorum*) there given as glosses to the Latin terms, are the following:—Latin *scaccus*, English "chesse;" Latin *talus alea*, English "dyse;" Latin *tabella* (*tabelle ? = tabellæ*), English "tabulles"—a form much resembling that adopted in one of the Celtic idioms—and Latin *scacarius*, English, "chekyr." English students of words, from first to last—from this old glossary to Cotgrave—have thus cited and treated the name of the game for three centuries and a half.

In next looking at Italy, and the references to the game of tables in the speech of that peninsula, we shall have to begin with Ducange's laborious work. He has a rubric: "*Tabula*, seu *Tabularum ludus*, vel alearum, alveolus, in quem tesseræ jaciuntur," which opens with the names of many classic writers (Isidor, Martial, Julius Africanus and others less known). He then cites the early statutes of some Italian cities (Pistoia and Vercelli among them), but without giving any dates. Mostly later references—besides some that we have noted in previous pages—are to a history of Jerusalem ("Historia Hierosolimitana," lib. viii) by Robertus Monachus, being a history of the first crusade dating from the twelfth century; the writer, however, calls the game (if he indeed means "tables") *aleæ*, and follows it by a mention of *scaci* (chess); and to the "Constitutiones" (chap. 8) of the Emperor Frederick II (1194-1250)—issued in his capacity as king of Naples and Sicily, as it is well to remember. Finally Ducange lets us know that there is a late Latin verb *tablizare*, meaning "to play at tables" ("tabula ludere,") and he cites a passage from the "Constitutiones" of Julian Antecessor (115. cap. 439): "Neque episcopus, neque presbyter.... neque alius cujuscunque religiosi consortii vel habitus constitutur *tablizare* audeat, vel socius ludentium fieri, vel spectator." But no date is given to this excerpt. Julianus Antecessor was, however, a Roman jurist of the sixth century, who was a teacher of law in Constantinople during the reign of the great (first) Justinian. He translated the "Constitutiones" or statutes (called "Novelles") from the original Greek into Latin, which remained for many centuries the authoritative code of law for all Europe. Julian seems to have been engaged at this work in 556. Of course, though perhaps probable, it is not absolutely certain that in this citation the word refers to exactly that table-game (or that form of tables) which prevailed four centuries later, and of which we have been treating. If it does, the fact leads to some important inferences regarding the introduction of the game into Europe. This verb existed likewise in later Greek, and this fact suggests some remarkable conclusions. We find it in every general Greek dictionary, ταβλίξειν ("to play at tables or dice"), and it is given as derived from the Latin *tabula*, which is itself represented, in a nominal form, by ταβλα, "a dice-table;" and then we have other forms, ταβλιστής, "a dice-player;" ταβλιστήριον, "a place for dice-playing;" and a comic word, ταβλιόπη, formed

in imitation of Καλλιόπη, said to signify "a game at dice," in connection with which we may observe that a colloquial, comic vocable of this sort hardly gets into speech or literature unless the thing satirized or treated risibly is very common, and very much talked of. We may take it for granted, knowing what we do of lexicographers' ways, that the "dice" comes in here simply because it is used in the game of tables, and that τάβλα, for instance, signifies merely a board with which tables is played (table-board); and so with the other words. The first notable fact about all this is that tables was played in the Eastern (Byzantine) Empire, and that it went thither from the Western (Latin) Empire. Unfortunately the Greek sources cited are mostly of an unsatisfactory character. For ταβλιστὴς we are referred to Suidas, who is supposed to be the author of a dictionary, and to have lived in the Byzantine Empire in the 10th century, but in fact nothing is really known about him. His glossary received many accessions after the original compiler was dead, and nobody can say which are the original words and which the later additions. It is very much the same with the "Greek Anthology," which is cited for τάβλα and ταβλιόπη. That well-known body of clever sayings, striking bits of verse and epigrams went on growing from classic times down, perhaps, to as late a date as 900. Zonaras is a reference a little more defined. He was a historian and lexicographer, and flourished in the opening years of the 12th century; he uses the verb ταβλίξειν. The last citation is from Thomas Magister—a Latin name as will be seen—the writer of a Greek grammar, and hence styled also Grammaticus. He it is who makes use of ταβλιστήριον, and he belongs to the very ultimate age of the Eastern Empire, being assigned to about the year 1310. A great deal might be made of all this if only some learned and patient Græcist would be good enough to look up all the passages in which these borrowed words occur, and weigh them carefully. Even without investigation the matter shows itself a subject of high interest. The interested student will find further instances of the employment of these Greek derivatives of the Latin *tabula* in the great "Thesaurus linguæ grecæ" of Henri Étienne (Stephanus), among them references to a Greek glossary older than that of Suidas. Its original compiler, Hesychius of Alexandria, lived, according to some in the 4th, according to others in the 6th century; but his vocabulary, like that of Suidas, was increased during subsequent generations, making dates difficult. The "Thesaurus" furnishes many very valuable citations.

But this is somewhat of a digression. In the romantic literature of Italy tables does not seem to play anything like the rôle it fills in French and English, or else no one has taken the trouble to bring together the passages in which it is mentioned. With that remarkable character, the Emperor Frederick II, just cited, begins, as far as our certain knowledge goes, the mediæval game of tables in the new Italy—as do so many other things—and it is next spoken of about the end of the century in which he died in the "Cento novelle antiche," a collection of tales made up, as is known, from many sources. Their originals are found in ancient and later chronicles, in the romances of chivalry, and in the fabliaux of the French trouvères. Here, as in the story-writers that followed, there was the same custom of grouping tables with chess which was so common in Old French. In one of the hundred "novelle" we are told that of the characters on the scene at

one time: "Appresso mangiare, quali prese a giuocare a zara,[96] e quali a tavola od' a schacchi, o ad altri diversi giuochi, e il duca si puose a giuocare con un altro nobile cavaliere." In the world-renowned narratives of Boccaccio, which were produced not more than half a century later, is found almost the same phrase (giorno 3, introd.):—"Chi a giuocare a scacchi e chi a tavole." This was reproduced by still another teller of tales a century and a half later, the Florentine Francesco Sacchetti,[97] in words again nearly identical.

Petrarch, in his most important Latin prose work, the "De remediis utriusque fortunæ"—a production overflowingly full of erudition, in an age when learning was the rare possession of a few—alludes to the game of tables. The "De remediis" was the most popular of all lay Latin writings in the centuries which lie between the 13th and the 17th. The libraries still preserve many reproductions of it in manuscript, while it was translated—despite its length—into many tongues, and, when printing came, was issued in many editions. The first German version was given to the world adorned with a multitude of wood-engravings by the cunning hand of Burgmaier, the favorite disciple, in that branch of art, of Albrecht Dürer. The "De remediis" is in two books, the first attempting to show that good fortune is not always a thing to be coveted, the second that ill fortune is not always a thing to be deprecated. Each of these books contains a certain number of dialogues, the interlocutors, being in the first book, Joy (or Hope) and Reason, and, in the second book, Sorrow (or Fear) and Reason. It must be confessed that the first speaker has very little to say for himself, his office being, in general, to utter

[96] Novella V (Libro di . . . cento novelle, Fiorenza 1572, pp. 8-9). The game of "zara," here grouped with tables and chess, represents the "dice," which we have so often seen similarly used in Old French. Tommaseo derives the vocable from the Greek τέσσαρα through the Latin, the word being applied to the die from its four-sidedness. But Zambaldi, in his later "Vocabolario etimologico" (1889), says that it comes from the Arabic *zar* = die—from the form with the assimilated article, *az-zar*, or, better, from the Middle Latin *ad zardum* ("at or on the dice," "by chance"), from which originates the Italian *azzardo* and our *hazard*. The game was evidently a pure dice-game, the combinations thrown by means of three dice counting more or less according to their character. Dante opens the sixth canto of the "Purgatory" with an image drawn from the playing of *zara:*

Quando si parte il giuoco della zara,
Colui che perde si riman dolente
Ripetendo le volte, e tristo impara:

Con l'altro se ne va tutta la gente:
Qual va dinanzi, e qual diretro il prende,
E qual da lato gli si reca a mente.

Ei non s'arresta, e questo e quello intende;
A cui porge la man, più non fa pressa;
E così dalla calca si difende.

The first three lines are admirably rendered by Longfellow, who gives a proper technical definition to "volte":

Whenever is broken up the game of zara
He who has lost remains behind despondent,
The *throws* repeating, and in sadness learns.

In his notes the translator says: "Zara was a game of chance played with three dice."

[97] Francesco Sacchetti, "Novelle" (Firenze 1724), II, pp. 66-68, nov. clxv.

the briefest statements of fact, or ejaculations, to serve as hooks upon which Reason may hang lengthy arguments and harangues. There are two dialogues relating to the game of tables. The first (book I, dial. XXVI) treats of *aleæ ludus*, which is tables, and of *ludus calculorum*, which latter is called, in the English rendering, "lottes." Both are described, but we quote only the earlier portion concerning "dice," or "tables"—both titles being used by the translator, who is Thomas Twyne. His version is very quaint; it is styled "Phisicke against fortune, as well prosperous as aduerse," and was printed, in attractive black letter, at London in 1579; it well deserves reproduction by reason of its delightful English. The "tables" chapter, in the earlier book, is entitled as we have hinted: "Of playing at Dice and Lottes" (De ludo aleæ et calculorum. Dialogus XXVI): "*Joy.*—I am delighted with playing at dice and lottes. *Reason.*—In the one of these games is losse in the other folly: yet it is reported that Scevola frequented them both, & that which is yet higher that Augustus the Emperour used the one. Yet notwithstanding, that this first chose these to be a recreation to hym selfe from the ceremonies of the Goddes, & the lawes of men, in the knowledge whereof he excelled, and Augustus from the cares of his great Empire, which he gouerned long and wel, now and then to refresh himselfe from his toyle: I wyl not commend the like in thee. For great and learned men haue certaine strange and peculier appetites, which if thou imitate aswel in maners as in doctrine, thou mayst sone fal: for al things are not worthy to be praised, which are praysed. *Joy.*—I take pleasure in playing at Tables. *Reason.*—Who would not be delighted to throw forth a couple or more of squared bones, with certaine numbers marked upon euery side, and looke whiche way they runne, that way to direct the fingers, to place the round Tablemen in order: A glorious exercise, which is lyke to deserue a famous name, with a triumphant chariot, & renouned dayes." This is valuable because of the light it throws on the character of the game of tables—being almost the sole, and certainly the best description of it, brief as it is, in the general literature of the Middle Ages. The other chapter (book II, dial. XVI) is one of the briefest in the whole work. Twyne calls it: "Of vnfortunate playing at Tables" (De aduerso ludo taxillorum). We give the whole of it: *Sorowe.*—I haue lost at Table playing. *Reason.*—Dyd I not tell thee when thou wonnest, that it was but vzurie, and not gayne? *Sorowe.*—I am drawne dry with gamyng. *Reason.*—This game is of the same qualitie that Phisitions be, by ministring of a litle, to drawe foorth a great deale: but beleeue mee, thou hast more cause now to reioyce, then when thou triumphedst with fals ioy. Better is sharpe chasticement, then deceitfull flatterie. The lytle vantage which thou gottest then, dyd bryng thee vnto the whirlepoole of gaming now, and this losse wyll reclayme thee thence agayne. It is better to goe the right way with a foule brydle, then to be dryuen into a pyt out of the way with a golden payre of reignes. *Sorowe.*—I haue lost at tables. *Reason.*—But thou hast wonne at the game of manners, yf what thou hast doone thou marke diligently: otherwyse good medicines were in vayne geathered togeather for an incurable disease, yf neyther losse nor shame coulde reuoke thee from this bottomblesse pyt of destruction: for when as experience bryngeth no profite, there is it in vayne to seeke to doo good with woordes." It is to be observed, however, that in this dialogue Petrarch styles the game to which he is alluding *ludus taxillorum*, which is, literally, "the game of the dice," but being the counterpart of the

one cited from the first book, the translator doubtless felt himself authorized to consider it "tables." [98]

In all the larger bibliographies of chess there is included the title of a quaint work in Italian written by bishop Angelo Rocca (or "Roccha," in the orthography of the time), and published at Rome in 1617, in which much is said of the game of *tavole*. The author writes to prove that cards, dice and tables—*tavole con dadi*, as he takes care once or twice to say—

[98] Before citing the original text of Petrarch, we give, by way of introduction, the remarks of the Italian Zdekauer—the title of whose treatise we quote on a following page—on the names and implements of the games in which dice were used, in the XIIIth and XIVth centuries, in Italy. He says:—"Innanzi tutto bisogna intendersi sul significato delle parole tecniche, usate nel medio evo in Italia per denominare i giuochi di fortuna e gli strumenti adoperativi. Questo punto è d'importanza, perchè allora si formarono parole nuove e principalmente, perchè il senso delle parole romane si era cambiato completamente, ed era qualche volta diventato proprio il contrario; come prima di tutto avvenne nella parola: *alea*. Mentre *alea* in lingua romana significa il dado di sei lati, puntato dal n°. 1 fin'al n°. 6;—poi si prese nel senso più largo di 'giuoco di dadi' in generale; e finalmente in quello di ogni giuoco di fortuna; questa parola negli statuti italiani serve, per significare un giuoco, in cui si adoperavano pedine, e dadi sopra un tavoliere. Questo è il così detto 'ludus tabularum.' La parola 'alea' e 'tabula' diventano sinonimi; e il Petrarca ancora, benchè fosse sommo conoscitore dell'idioma, fa uso della parola 'alea,' per significare il giuoco delle tavole (*De remed. utriusque fort.* Dialog. 26. '*De ludo aleae et calculorum.*') Il modo, in cui la parola *alea* perdette il suo significato antico, ed acquistò quello del giuoco di tavole, si spiega con questo, che essa già di buon ora venne presa nel senso dello scacchiere; e così facilmente potè di poi essere adoperata, per significare un giuoco in cui il tavoliere era essenziale. Mentre dunque *alea* perdette il suo senso antico, la lingua formò una parola nuova per il dado puntato, di sei lati. Questa parola è *taxillus*. '*Taxillus*' invece non è che un diminutivo della parola latina *talus*, che non significa il dado, ma l'ossetto, nella sua forma naturale, come proviene dal piede posteriore degli agnelli. Soltanto gli umanisti levarono via questa confusione, ed il merito si deve a Celio Calcagnini, il famoso precursore di Copernico, il quale nel suo scritto '*de talorum, tesserarum et calculorum ludis*' (Opera, Bas. 1544, pag. 286-301) chiarì i fatti. Questo suo merito è da stimarsi tanto più altamente, in quanto che i chiosatori molte volte sbagliarono nel commentare i due titoli: Digest. XI, 5 *de* '*aleatoribus*' e Cod. Just. 3,43 '*de aleatorum usu*' prendendo la parola alea ora nel suo senso antico, ora nel senso medioevale. Traccie di questo errore si trovano ancora sulla fine del sec. XV. (*Paris a Puteo*, l. c. 40; *Costa*, l. c. 2, 34, e 4, 3). I due gruppi principali del giuoco di fortuna nel medio evo sono adunque il giuoco de' dadi, e quello delle tavole." Zdekauer accompanies these preliminary remarks by notes of great value, citing many early writers on the subject of the Latin name by which the game of tables came to be known. Among them are Giovanni d'Andrea, the Bolognese canonist (*d.* 1348), who speaks of the "differentiam inter ludum azari [dice], qui pendet a fortuna, et ludum alearum sive, tabularum, qui mixtus pendet a fortuna, et ingenio;" and Marinus Socinus, a commentator on the Decretals, who says: "Ludus alæarum id est tabularum cum taxillis." "Similmente," Zdekauer goes on to say, "gli statuti [*i. e.* the municipal codes of Italy], usano queste due parole [*i. e. alea* and *tabula*] come sinonimi, facendo eccezione nei loro divieti ora del '*ludus ad aleas*,' ora per quello '*ad tabulas.*'" It will be noticed that Petrarch uses the expression, *ludus aleæ* for "tables," while later he speaks of it as a dice-game, *ludus taxillorum*. Isidore of Seville (born in the 6th, died in the 7th century), the author of the "Origines," says *alea, id est ludus tabulæ*. Zdekauer has likewise a long and interesting note on the derivation of the word *zara*. The text of Petrarch reads thus in the original Latin:—"De ludo aleæ & calculorum. Dialogus XXVI. Gav.—Aleæ ludus & calculorū placet. *RA.*—Damnosum illud, hoc inane, vtroque tamē idem ille Scæuola, quódque est altius Augustus Cæsar altero vti solitus fertur. Neq; rursus, ideò quòd ille, à cerimoniis deorum atque hominum legibus quas excellentissimè calluit, iste à curis summi imperij quod diutissimè atque optimè rexit, tale sibi interdū laboris diuerticulū elegisset, hoc in te probauerim. Sūt enim & doctis ac magnis viris appetitus quidā peregrini et sui, quorū si vt in doctrinis sic in moribus imitator fueris, facilè labi queas, neque enim omnium qui laudātur, laude digna sunt omnia. *G.*—Aleæ ludo delector. *R.*—Quis nō delectetur super pictā tabulā consignatas numeris ossium quadraturas crispanti cubito iactare, quaq; ille direxerit trepidantibus digitis rotundas in aciem tabellas mittere? Gloriosum exercitium &

are forbidden games, while chess is allowed by all the ecclesiastical authorities. But the noteworthy point of his discourse for us is, that we learn from it the fact that as late as the first quarter of the 17th century the name of the game in Italy was still *tavole* (in the plural), and that apparently no other cognomen had ever been applied to it.[99] In Italian, too, but of far more recent date, is a dissertation—too brief and too limited in its scope—which attempts to give a description of *tavole*. The writer is a well-known Tuscan

præclarum nomen, & currus & laureas meriturum."— The extract from the second book is as follows:—"De aduerso ludo taxillorum. Dialogus XVI. DOLOR.—Taxillorū in ludo perdidi. *RA.*—Nónne tibi dixeram dvm vinceres, fænus id esse non lucrum? *DO.*—Ludo exhaustus sum. *RA.*—Hic est ludo illi mos, qui medicis perexiguo ingesto plurimū exhaurire: crede autem mihi nūc potius gaudendum quàm dum falso gaudio exultabas. Melior est acris castigatio quàm blanda fallacia. Illud te lucellum ad ludi voraginem vocabat, hoc te damnum inde retrahet. Satius est turpi freno rectum iter agere, quàm habenis aureis præceps in deuiū agi. *DO.*—Amisi in ludo taxillorum. *RAT.*—Vicisti in ludo morum, si quid ageris profundius attendisti: alioquin morbo insanabili frustra remedia cogerentur, si ab hoc baratro nec te damnum reuocat nec pudor, vbi rebus nil proficitur, nec quicquam verbis aggrediare." Burgmaier's illustration to book I, dialogue XXVI, is of the highest interest. Its date is before 1520, and it represents a terrace, on which are seated, on the right hand, two players engaged at the game of tables (the board and men very plainly depicted), and on the left two chess-players, also occupied at a game. Between these groups, in the background, at the foot of a column, are two apes playing at merelles ("nine men's morris"). All the boards give a good idea of the luxury of the mediœval courts in the matter of tables and other implements connected with the games in question.

[99] Angelo Roccha, "Trattato contra i givochi delle carte e dadi prohibiti" (Roma 1617). The portions of this treatise devoted particularly to chess embrace pp. 71-81 (divided into three chapters), and in this brief essay (pp. 75-76), the author interpolates the following statement concerning the derivation of the name of the game, *scaccho* as he writes it:—"Non è parola detta dalla voce latina *scandendo* come malamente scriue in questo Polidoro Virgilio, ma è voce che deriua, e ha origine dalla lingua hebraica; e giudica, che l'inuentore di detto giuoco sia stato hebreo, come mostrano queste due parole, *scaccho, mattho*, con le quali si finisce detto giuoco; nel quale quando 'l Re si troua circondato di maniera tale, che è forzato a leuarsi dal suo luogo, si dice all'hora *scaccho;* perchè *scach*, in lingua hebraica, è quel medesimo che appresso noi è *circondato* e *intorniato*. Ma perchè 'l morto da gli hebrei è detto *math*, o *meth*; però nel medesimo giuoco quando 'l Re è reso totalmente assediato, e fatto immobile, come morto, all'hora si dice, *scach math*; ma corrottamente in Italia si dice *scaccho mattho* e con queste due parole si finisce 'l giuoco. Tutto questo dice Gregorio Tholosano." The author here cited, Gregory of Toulouse (1540-1597), was a noted jurist; his etymology of the word *scacco* seems to have escaped the researches of chess bibliographers and to be cited by nobody but Rocca.—One of the most surprising pieces of chess etymology—since we are on that theme—is one in which two distinguished lexicologists have each his share of honour. In Brachet's "Etymological dictionary of the French language," the English edition of which is issued at the Clarendon Press (3d ed. 1882) under the learned supervision of Oxford university, we find *sub voce* "pion," the following statement: "a pawn (in chess), O. Fr. *poon*, or *paonnet*, from *paon*, a peacock, q. v. Littré tell us that the pawn in early times was in the form of a peacock." We should have regarded this astounding derivation as a printer's blunder had it not been for the reference to Littré, since Brachet, under the next rubric ("pion, a foot-soldier"), gives the real etymology of the word (from the Lat. accusative *pedonem*, from *pedes*) in detail, and we should have taken it for granted that the two paragraphs were to be united, and the "peacock" element eliminated from the first. But, turning to the huge "Dictionnaire de la langue française" of Littré (*pion*), we find the lines cited to be indeed there, and can only wonder at their existence—wondering more, perhaps, that they should have misled Brachet. It is quite evident that neither etymologist knew either chess, or chess history. The blunder is corrected by Scherer, in his "Dictionnaire d'étymologie française" (3e ed. 1888)—but then he has some similar sins of his own to answer for, as when, in deriving the Old French roc (=rook) "du persan *rokh*," he adds the meaning of the Persian vocable, "chameau monté par des archers," which is almost as amazing a creation, in this connection, as the peacock of Scherer's predecessors. The blunder is copied by the latest Italian etymologist, who, finding it in Scherer, took its correctness for granted without any further research.

scholar, Lodovico Zdekauer, and his treatise, "Il giuoco in Italia nei secoli XIII e XIV," was published at Florence in 1886, but is little known abroad. In it (pp. 9-10), after treating of dice-play pure and simple, he says: "Non meno numerose che le variazioni del giuoco dei dadi sono quelle del giuoco di tavole. Esso si distingue da quello, perchè vi si adoperano le pedine [strictly 'pawns,' but here, as in some other writers, 'men'], e lo scacchiere [here 'table-board' simply] sopra di cui (*super alea*) ora si gettano i tre dadi [meaning that, in addition to dice, necessary in all dice-play, we have here a board and men]. La parola *tabula* non significa lo scacchiere [board], ma le pedine [men, that is, all the pieces of the game] lo scacchiere [which is used in this game] si chiama '*tabolerium*.' È ovvia la disposizione degli statuti, che si debba giuocare con tutte le tavole ['cum triginta tabulis'—that is thirty men were used in playing the game]. Simile giuoco ci viene raffigurato negli affreschi, che si trovano nel portico della chiesa di Lecceto, vicino a Siena." In the wood-cut which accompanies this passage, representing a portion of the fresco alluded to, it is not easy to distinguish the character of the board, but there appear to be, as stated, fifteen men on each side. At the present day *tavola reale* (singular) is in Italian the common name for backgammon, the adjective perhaps indicating that it is the best or oldest of all varieties of tables, or that it was once a court-game. Tommaseo, the lexicographer, says that it is played by means of "2 tavolette [the 2 divisions of the board] insieme riunite, dove sono ventiquattro scacchi [points] movendo via via le pedine secondo i punti che con i dadi si scuoprono"—a seemingly awkward definition in which "scacchi" must refer to the points (twelve on each side), of the table (backgammon) board, or to the spaces occupied by these points, affording a parallel to the oldest Arabic usage according to which the same word (*bêt*= house) was applied to the "square" on the chess-board and the "point" of the board on which "nard" was played. In modern chess the Italian "tavola" means "drawn game"—whether drawn by reason of lack of mating force, by perpetual check, by obstinate repetition of the same moves, or by the fifty-move limit. We must not forget to say, before taking leave of Italian tables, that in the tenth century the higher clergy of Italy are charged, by at least two authors, with devotion to dice. One of these accusers is Ratherius of Verona (but a native of Liège), who attacks the Italian bishops as living luxurious lives, in a passage cited by Gregorovius and copied by Van der Linde.[100] The other similar charge, aimed against all the clergy, is to be found in the letter of citation against Pope John XII, who was dethroned by the Emperor Otho I in 963. Unfortunately we cannot give the Latin text, and hence do not know the word used to express the kind of "dicing" they indulged in. The German expression is *würfelten*, that is, "they diced." In the following century we have the famous letter of Petrus Damianus (Italian "Damiano," but who has positively nothing to do with the Portuguese Damiano, one of the earliest writers on chess, though the two are often confounded), a cardinal and bishop of Ostia, hard by Rome. We know what word he used. He speaks of the passion for bird-catching, the chace and

[100] See his "Geschichte" (I, p. 139) where is given the excerpt from Gregorovius, "Rom" (III. 1870), p. 220. The works of Ratherius were published by the brothers Ballerini at Verona (1765), and there is a notable account of this prelate (in which he is styled Rather) by Albert Vogel: "Ratherius von Verona und das zehnte Jahrhundert" (Jena 1854).

especially for dice (?) and chess (*alearum in super furiae vel schachorum*), among the clergy of the peninsula. Those devoted to gaming are called *aleatorii* (*episcopi*), and *alea* is again used of the game a few lines further on. The writer gives an account of his reproval of a Florentine bishop (or a bishop of Florence). The latter excused himself for his interest in chess by saying that the ecclesiastical statutes did not directly prohibit that game. To which the episcopal critic responded:—"Chess, indeed, the statute does not expressly punish; but both kinds of games are comprehended under the name of *aleæ*. If then that game (*alea*) be forbidden and nothing be indicated about chess, still, as the same word includes both, therefore both are condemned."[101] The logic of Bishop Damiano was not any too sound, but the Florentine bishop, "being mild of disposition and shrewd of wit," as we are told, yielded to the argument offered and promised to err no more. The reader should notice the use of *alea* both in the singular and plural. The joining together of *alea* and *scacchi*, after a custom which we have seen was so common everywhere in that age, and the fact that they were the two games familiar to the convents and schools of the time, make it pretty certain that the dice-game alluded to was tables. We can hardly fancy a wise bishop addicted to such a diversion of mere chance as the casting of dice without the opportunity of making any use of his intellect, such as tables would give him. With this episcopal epistle we must take leave of Italy until she produces a Strohmeyer, who will thoroughly search her older literature for the many scattered notices of chess and tables which it doubtless contains.

As to Spain there is the same lack of material, in an accessible shape, as in Italy. The celebrated MS book of games, composed by the command, and probably under the direction, of Alfonso X, king of Leon and Castile, and still one of the choicest treasures of the library of the Escorial—that vast monastery, mausoleum, palace, which lies within an easy morning's journey of Madrid—is both the earliest treatise on chess and the oldest document relating to tables which have had their origin in Europe. Unfortunately for our present purpose little heed has been paid to any part of this venerable literary monument except to the pages which treat of chess. Van der Linde alone,[102] has endeavored to give a list of the subjects dealt with in the non-chess portion, but he does not go farther. According to him the first book of this splendid codex concerns chess only; the second treats of games played with three dice (*Libro de los dados*); and the third, which Van der Linde calls the *Libro de los tablas*—whether this be the actual title it is not easy to say—apparently embraces games played with dice and men, or, in other words, the varieties of the game of tables. Van der Linde's enumeration of the chapter-subjects, that is, of the different games, in this third section is as follows:—*Doblet*, *fallas*, *seis*, *dos e as*, *emperador*, *medio-*

[101] "Ad quod ego scachum, inquam non punit; sed utriusque ludi genus aleæ nomine comprendit. Quapropter dum alea prohibetur, et nominatim de scacho nihil dicitur, constat procul dubio utrumque genus uno vocabulo comprehensum, unius sententiæ auctoritate damnatum."—B. Petri Damiani Operum tomus I. (Romæ 1606), p. 24, *Epist. X, ad Alexandrum II Romanum ponteficem, et Hildebrandum cardinalem.* Forcellini says (*sub voce*) that *aleæ* is a general name for all games, *tam simplices quam mixti*, which are played with pieces or men, while *alea* is used for those in which chance exclusively prevails (dice only, for instance). The play on words (*alea* and *aleæ*) of the subtle bishop is thus explained.

[102] "Quellenstudien der Geschichte des Schachspiels" (1881), pp. 72 ff.

emperador, *la pareji de entrada*, *cab*, *equinal*, *todas*, *tablas*, *laquet*, *la bufa*, *cortesia*, *la bufa de baldrac*, *los Romanos reencontrat*. Of these *doblet* is doubtless the *doublets* of our old lists of amusements,[103] and is thus defined by one of the latest of our larger English dictionaries (the "Century"): "A game with dice upon tables, somewhat resembling backgammon," added to which the following quotations are given:

> They be at their *doublets* still,

a phrase from Latimer's fourth sermon before Edward VI (1549); and

> What! where's your cloak?...
> To tell you truth, he hath lost it at *doublets*,

a passage occurring in "The Ordinary" (1651) of Peter Cartwright, who, singularly enough, was at once a poet, a dramatist and a divine of some little eminence. *Fallas*, in our Alphonsan list, is probably the English *failes*, a variation of backgammon which seems at one time to have been common;[104] *dos e as* is our *deuce-ace*, used in connection with dice, and found in Shakspeare, and may resemble the backgammon variant described in the "Compleat Gamester" (1739) under the title of "Size-ace;" *emperador* is perhaps the kind of tables called in France and England in the fourteenth century "the imperial game"; *todas*, or something similar, is found in French notes on table games; *tablas* is, of course, the ordinary form of tables; *la bufa* Van der Linde seems to connect with *puff*, the German name for backgammon, of which there is an early variant, *buf*. Several more—or perhaps all—of these games are very likely varieties of tables, but in the present state of our knowledge it is idle to discuss this section of the Alphonsan MS. Its fourth and final division is of a miscellaneous character, including first an enlarged chess (*grande acedrez*), followed by a game styled *tablas de alcedrez* (in the orthography of the MS) a sort of combination of chess and tables, as is to be inferred; then comes a kind of astronomical chess—the combined result perhaps of don Alfonso's two favorite studies—the heavens and the chessboard—styled *escaques*, the title of which looks as if it might be a variation of the word chess; and then the section closes with a very simple sort of

[103] See the "Compleat Gamester" and other early treatises on games, English and French; also the preceding p. 80.

[104] To this game (as we learn from the just-cited "Century Dictionary" sub *fayles*), Ben Jonson, in his "Every man in his humour" (act iii, 3), thus alludes:

> He's no precisian, that I'm certain of,
> Nor rigid Roman Catholic. He'll play
> At *fayles* and tick-tack; I have heard him swear.

The archeologist Francies Douce—he who wrote an interesting essay on "The European names of the chess-men" (1794)—has described the game of *fayles*: "It is a very old table-game" [as old evidently as the days of King Alfonso], "and one of the numerous varieties of backgammon that were formerly used in this country. It was played with three dice and the usual number of men or pieces. The peculiarity of the game depended on the mode of first placing the men on the points. If one of the players threw some particular throw of the dice, he was disabled from bearing off any of his men and therefore *fayled* in winning the game—and hence the appellation of it." *Faylis* is the orthography in the Latin XIVth century MS on tables preserved in the British Museum, to which we shall recur.

dice-game called *alquerque*. This great work may well be ranked as one of the hundred most famous codices in European libraries, was compiled, too, at the instance of a most famous king (between 1251 and 1282), and is, artistically, of magnificent execution. It ought, morever, considering its date, to be of considerable value to the linguistic student. Under all these circumstances it does not seem too much to ask, in these days of reprints and reproductions, of early-text societies, of accurate and easily executed copying processes, that so interesting a monument of royal scholarship should be made more available to investigators; and that the Spanish government, having already given to the world the astronomical works of this enlightened monarch, should follow such a good deed by another. Brunet y Bellet likewise consecrates one of his chapters (the fifth, "El Ajedrez," 1870, pp. 243-268) to the "Libro de don Alfonso el Sabio," in which he confines himself rigidly to the chess portion of the codex. But Alfonso, the most prolific of all royal authors, and who contributed in so many ways to the development of his country's language and letters,[105] alludes in other writings to the game of tables. It is mentioned in his remarkable code of laws—still the basis of Spanish jurisprudence—known as "Las siete partidas" (in its part II, as published, title V, law 21); and again, on more than one page, in his historical work on the Crusades ("La gran conquista de ultra mar")—the most familiar passage, perhaps, being that in which he relates how the father of Godfrey of Bouillon made his sons learn the "juegos des ajedrez é de tables." Of another Spanish sovereign there exists a notable relic in the archives of Barcelona. It is an inventory of the effects of Martin of Aragon, the immediate predecessor of Ferdinando II, the husband of Queen Isabella of Castile—the two being those jointly ruling monarchs who played so large a part in the story of Columbus. King Martin, who was the last of his house, that of Barcelona, died in 1410. The list of chess boards and chessmen, table-boards and table-men, in the king's possession is extracted from the inventory, made doubtless after his death, and printed by Brunet y Bellet.[106] It is too long to be given here, but we reproduce one or two of the items relating to tables, in the orthography of the original. We find *un tauler de jugar a taules ab les puntes de jaspi e de nacre* ("a table-board with points of jasper and mother-of-pearl"), this board, with its resplendent "points," having on the reverse side a chess-board inlaid with the same rich materials; and there were other boards of the same sort, chess on one side and tables on the other—exactly similar to the chess and backgammon boards of to-day. One had tables on one side, and the other side was devided between chess and "nine men's morris." Another board is described as a table-board of jujube wood (*un tauler de taules de gingolers*), and there were cases (*estuches*) containing sometimes men for tables, sometimes chessmen, as when the inventory speaks of a case of precious wood of two divisions, in the first of which were 32 table-men and in the other 32 chessmen, one half of each of ivory and the other half of ebony (*de dues cases*

[105] Ticknor, the historian of Spanish literature, states that Alfonso "first made the Castilian a national language," and estimates at a high value the kings's Code and other works, saying that they gave the right direction and character to Spanish prose—"a service perhaps greater than it has been permitted any other Spaniard to render the prose literature of his country."

[106] "El Ajedrez," pp. 217-219. The list is also linguistically interesting.

en la 1ª de las quals hauia XXXII taules e en laltre XXXII pesses de schachs la meytat de vori, el altre meytat de banus). In the same good king's library was a paper codex entitled "Dels jochs de scachs e de taules" (to say nothing of five other MSS devoted only to chess), the description of which in "El Ajedrez" would make the calmest-minded book-hunter's eyes water. Brunet y Bellet also tells us that among the Catalans of those times there were many such treatises on chess and tables (and just in these days in which we are writing he has edited an old Catalan translation of the chess-morality of Jacobus de Cessolis). From "El Ajedrez" we likewise learn that don Diego de Clemencin, one of the commentators of Cervantes' great romance, in his note on the well-known chess passage in "Don Quixote" (v., p. 46 of the Clemencin edition), speaks of the games of tables and chess as very common in the Spanish Middle Ages (*Las tablas y ajedrez eran juegos muy usados en la Edad Media.* [107] Of Spain's sister kingdom there is hardly anything to be said, and nothing of an early date to cite. We will content ourselves by remarking that the word "tables" (*tabolas*) is yet in use in Portuguese as the title of a game, though the fabricators of dictionaries don't quite know how to treat it. A late lexicon of the English and Portuguese, that of Lacarda, translates, in its English-Portuguese part (1866), the word "tric-trac" by (*jogo de*) *tabolas;* while in the Portuguese-English part (1870), he renders (*jogo de*) *gamão* (our "gammon") by backgammon, but gives (*jogo de*) *tabolas* as "the game called tables *or draughts.*" Such is the intelligence, as well as the consistency, of lexicographers!—This is a meagre notice of what, at the present moment, can be hastily gleaned about this ancient game in Europe's southwestern peninsula. The reader will understand that Spain and Portugal, like Italy, remain virgin fields of great promise, awaiting the zealous investigator into the story of the *ludus tabularum.*

Into the language of Germany the Latin word *tabula* has made its way in various forms. The oldest of these is *zabal*, found in the Old High German period, which terminates with the 12th century; in the Middle High German, the linguistic period which followed, the word became *zabel.* So little has been written in Germany—the land of learned research—in regard to the social games of the earlier periods that scarcely any examples of the use of *zabal* or *zabel*, in their simple form, to signify the game of tables, are available. Massmann, in his "Geschichte des mittelalterlichen Schachspieles" (Quedlinburg 1839, p. 53), asserts that in an Old German gloss of the 9th century, *ludere tabulis* is rendered by *za spilonne zaples* ("they play at tables"). Schmeller, in his "Bayerisches Wörterburch" (IV., p. 215), cites the old South-German words *zabilstein* ("table-stone") and *würzabelstein* ("wurf-zabelstein"), signifying a piece at tables. In the knightly poem of Wigalois—which we shall cite again—(edited by Benecke, Berlin, 1819, and better by Pfeiffer, Leipzig 1847) occur the following lines (v. 10601):

> Da funden si der saelden schin
> Und schöner kurzewile vil
> Von *zabel* und von seitespil.

The poet, Wirnt von Gravenberg, composed this work, derived from French sources, at the very beginning of the thirteenth century.

[107] See "El Ajedrez," p. 221.

It is meanwhile taken for granted that tables came over the Alps, or across the Rhine, before the introduction of chess,[108] but when the latter arrived it was at once seen to be a table-game like the diversion with which people were already familiar. So, as in Iceland and Holland, it was deemed necessary to distinguish them. The old game, because it was played with dice, or accompanied by the casting of dice, was called *wurfzabel* (or "dice-tables"), the latter became *schachzabel* ("chess-tables"). The first appearance of chess in Germany is in the fragmentary Latin poem, "Ruodlieb," seemingly composed in Bavaria—close by one of the most frequented routes between Italy and the North—and now assigned to the middle of the 11th century.[109] Being in Latin it, of course, throws no light on the vocable *zabal*. In the compound *schachzabel* the second element underwent much popular deterioration, for we find *schachzagel* and *schafzagel* (which latter, according to Van der Linde, now lingers as a Bavarian name for the morris-game), not to speak of the later *schachtafel* (exactly corresponding to the Icelandic *skáktafl*). Wackernagel (p. 36) cites from the inventory of a nobleman's possessions (Count Sibotos von Neuenburg), towards the end of the 13th century, four *schahzabel* and four *wurfzabel*, and ivory men belonging to both games (*elefantei lapides tam ad wurfzabel quam ad scahzabel pertinentes*). In Middle High German literature there are various allusions to tables. In the "Wigalois" (v. 10582 ff.) we have an allusion to the splendid boards and men of early times, contrasted with the cheaper wooden ones of later days:

> Dâ lagen vor der frouwen fier
> Wurfzabel unde kurrier,
> Geworht von helfenbeine;
> Mit edelem gesteine
> Spilten si, mit holze niht,
> Als man nu frouwen spilen siht.

The word "kurrier," in this passage, has been much debated. It is too early to be considered a reference to the *ălla rabbiosa*, or modern chess (called in German the "Current oder das welsch schachspiel"); and if it means the "Courrier spiel" mentioned by Jakob von Ammenhausen in his chess poem (1337), and long played at the chess village of Ströbeck, then this must be its first appearance in literature. There are various references

[108] See Wackernagel's "Ueber das Schachzabelbuch Konrads von Ammenhausen" in the "Beiträge zur Geschichte und Literatur" of Kurz and Weissenbach (Aarau 1846), p. 38. Speaking of figurative expressions drawn from chess which had become every day utterances, the writer says: "Schon das wurfelspiel [tables] hatte solcher ausdrücke genug an die hand gegeben," implying a considerable priority of tables in Germany.

[109] Von der Lasa gives the most interesting account of the chess episode in the "Ruodlieb" ("Zur Geschichte und Literatur des Schachspiels," pp. 47-51). The earliest writers on this poem decided that the handwriting of the MS proved it to be of the 9th century, but later estimates have gradually reduced its ascribed age. The chess story is not unlike those occurring in some of the Icelandic sagas, in which the chess expressions are now regarded as later interpolations, or erroneous uses of terms relating to tables. Might it not be that the Ruodlieb MS was written in some remote convent of the Bavarian Alps, where old forms of writing lingered to a late day, which would make the palæographical indications uncertain? Still it is not impossible that a German monk, having visited Rome earlier in the century, might have brought some idea of chess to his transalpine home. The poem has been edited by Seiler (1882). As to the "Wigalois" see Massman's "Geschichte" (Register especially), p. 158.

to *Currier-schach* and *Currier-spiel*, as well as to *current-chess*, in the index to V. d. Linde's "Geschichte." Wackernagel quotes (p. 35) a passage from an early source—he gives no date—attacking the game of tables: "Noch ist einer leie spil, des herren spulgent, von dem doch vil sünden und schanden kumt etswenne: *wurfzabel* ich daz spil iu nenne." In an ordinance of the authorities of Bockholt (Prussia), of about the 14th century, the game of tables is styled *werftafel*, but sometimes *bretspil* is used specifically for the earlier game. In the great museum at Nuremberg, and in other German collections, table-boards ascribed to the 14th and 15th centuries are preserved, but descriptions of them are not easy to procure.—Mentions of the game occur early in the Dutch, Danish and Swedish literatures—the name being always a derivative from *tabula*, but exact references cannot yet be made. In Icelandic, as we have seen, the word *tafl* is frequent in a very remote age.

As to the Celtic lands there seems great reason to believe that tables, in at least one of its forms, was a familiar diversion at a very early period. The old Irish and Welsh literary monuments abound in notices of games—all of which ignorant translators generally render by chess. But from lack of any systematic investigation by Celtic scholars the subject is still most obscure. But it is not improbable that the Britons acquired from the Romans a knowledge of certain classic table-games, and retained their practice. The word *tawlbwrdd* ("throw-board" as it is rendered), if we are not greatly mistaken, has *tabula* as its first element, and the English *board* (Icelandic *borð*) as its second. This is a Welsh term, which seems to have been widely known and used. It occurs repeatedly in Dr. William Wotton's "Leges Walliçæ" (London 1730, p. 266 and 583), in a passage cited both by Van der Linde and Forbes.[110] In Erse, at the present time, the game of backgammon is called *taiplis* (= tables). The lexicographers give, as corresponding to the Anglo Saxon *tæfel*, the Gælic *taibhleas* (backgammon) and the Welsh *tawlbwrdd* (which the earlier Bosworth renders "gaming table like a chess-table"). Bosworth (1838) likewise cites *taol* and *taul* as Celtic forms of tabula (the latter Armorican).—Although the information is hardly in place here, it may be of interest to know that in all the Arabic lands from Morocco to Syria (the game of) backgammon is called (*li'b*) *et taula*, that is "(the game of) tables." The word *taula* is, of course, a descendant of the Latin *tabula*, but at what time it came into the new Arabic it is perhaps impossible to ascertain—though it was surely more than two centuries ago. Modern Italian words abound in all those Vulgar-Arabic idioms which are spoken along the Mediterranean shores, and this is very likely no older than the Italian form (*tavola*).

Chess and Draughts. — Before we endeavour to consider more fully the question of what the game of tables really was, and in order to clear the ground somewhat, we will note that certain writers have hinted that the Icelandic *tafl* (in one or another of its varieties at any rate) may be identical with the game of draughts; it is therefore desirable to look a little at

[110] The passage names the objects to be conferred by the Welsh king on certain court officials at the time of their installation, among them being always a *tawlbwrdd*. The varied value to be placed upon the *tawlbwrdd* manufactured of different materials (a bullock's horn, a hart's antler, a bone of a sea animal, wood) is also indicated. Reading the list of objects one gets the idea that the sense of *tawlbwrdd* might be "dice-box" or "pyrgus."

this latter game, its character and its history. The first thing which strikes everybody upon making himself familiar with the game, is that it is played upon a chessboard. After an instant of reflection follows the question: Is this really the case? Is draughts played upon a chessboard? Or is not rather chess played upon a draught-board? Was not chess a further and more complicated development of draughts? Happily the various investigations into the history of chess have answered these queries. Whatever else is known with certainty as to the story of chess, this is at any rate sure, that the game existed long before draughts had come into being. And another thing may be taken as equally a matter of fact, and that is that draughts had its origin in the game of chess, and is merely a modification or simplification of that diversion. It is played on a board designed and used for chess; the ordinary moves of its men are imitations of the moves of some of the chessmen; and a man arriving by forward movements at the eighth, or farthest, rank of the board, undergoes a change very similar to that which takes place, in the case of a pawn under like circumstances, at chess. These three features make the "whence" of draughts quite clear, and show the propriety of its alternative appellation of "chequers," or checkers, which is sometimes heard.[111] Van der Linde believes that the game of draughts was developed out of chess in Spain, and certainly the earliest literature of the game is Spanish.[112] He finds its precise origin in the queen (or *fers*) of Arabic-Spanish chess, the draughtmen reproducing the move of the queen, as it was in that period; and he seems to consider that the presence of several chess-queens (in end-games), on the board at the same time, (of which he presents some examples),[113] may have first given birth to the idea of the newer game. The historian of chess fails,. however, to continue this line of enquiry to its utmost limit, and through all its ramifications—not telling us by what process, and with what scope in view, the derived diversion was evolved. Otherwise he would have made

[111] This would mean the game of the *chekyr* (Old-English), or chess-board, and belongs really to the American dialect of English. In New England chess was almost wholly unpractised until a century and a half (or more) after the country's settlement. To the colonists, therefore, the chess-board (or "checker-board," as it was oftenest styled), was only known as a board used in playing the game of draughts, and draughts was accordingly looked upon as preëminently the game of the *chekyr*, with little thought or knowledge of chess. "Checkers" continues to be the household game of the country districts in very many sections of the United States—especially in the winter evenings of the villagers and farmers. It may thus be appropriately styled "rural chess."

[112] The first printed books on draughts were of the 16th century, and were all issued in a single city, Valencia. The earliest was: "El ingenio juego de marro, de punto o *damas*" (1547) by Antonio Torquemada; the second, "Del juego de las *damas*, volgarmente el marro" (1590) by Pedro Ruiz Montero; and the third, "Libro del ivego de las *damas*, por otro nombre el marro de pvnta" (1597) compiled by Lorenzo Valls. The game, it thus seems, had a second name in early Spanish—*marro*, or *marro de punto*. We must always then bear in mind, in this connection, that there is no trace of draughts, in any land, back of the 15th century.

[113] "Geschichte des Schachspiels," II, p. 394. For a vast deal of interesting matter concerning draughts, see the full index to the "Geschichte" *sub Dame* (= stein), *dambrett* and *damespiel*, and in particular the remarkable section VIII of the third "Abtheilung," entitled "das Damenspiel," in volume II., pp. 392-416, which ends with a bibliography of the game; also the "Quellen-studien," p. 241, as to the name of the game. Outside of Van der Linde's work there is to be found almost nothing of the slightest value in regard to this "little-chess," as it is styled in Russian—*shaski*, its Slavonic name being the plural of *shaska*, a diminutive of the Russian word representing "chess."

it more clear that the inventor had in his mind's eye the continual forward, and never retrograde move of the pawn, as the foremost characteristic of the move of all the figures in the modified game; and, added to this all-essential feature, the subordinate one of the pawn-attribute of changing its character as soon as it could no longer continue its forward march. He neglected, too, to perceive that the capturing method of the draughtman originated in the early Asiatic-European move of the bishop—to the third square diagonally, leaping over any intervening piece (that is over any piece occupying the central square of its march), exactly as the draughtman now leaps over the opposing figure which he thereby captures. He tells us elsewhere in his invaluable writings that, up to the date of its introduction into Spain (or, perhaps, a little later), the chessboard was all of one colour, the squares indicated only by lines; he even states the fact more definitely, saying that before the date of the chess-work compiled under the direction and authority of Alfonso X, no indication is found, in or out of Spain, of a parti-coloured board; but he omits to observe what influence this novelty would be likely to have in helping to originate the new departure in the history and use of the checkered table. For this new colouring of the squares would, of course, at once give a great prominence to the diagonals, making them of even greater distinctness—as will be understood at a glance—than the rectilinear squares. We may, therefore, say that draughts is a simplified chess, designed to avoid the difficulties of the Indian game, and evolved from the Indian chess by a process like this:—1. The squares used were limited to those employed by the queen and bishop in the old chess of Spain (namely the diagonals only, for the movements of the queen as well as those of the bishop, were then restricted to a single colour—as we now say since the chessboard has become parti-coloured); 2. Two ranks were then left between the arrays of the opposing players for the opening battle-field (*i. e.* skirmishing-ground); 3. The men were next given the move—as it was at that time—of the chess-queen (one square each way diagonally), while, as their capturing-move, was borrowed the ordinary contemporary move of the bishop (to the third square, diagonally jumping over any intervening obstacle); and, as a final characteristic, the men received the attribute of the chess-pawn, which, upon attaining the eighth rank, acquires a great increase of power, together with the new faculty of making retrograde moves. Thus we see that, at the bottom of the inventor's mind, was the idea of diminution as a simplifying force—diminution of the squares by one half (32 in place of 64); of the battlefield free to both forces at the outset by one half (2 ranks in place of 4); of the number of figures by one fourth (24 instead of 32); and of the variety of pieces by five-sixths (chess having king, queen, rook, bishop, knight, pawn, all with varying powers). The evolution of the new game, as here portrayed, seems so natural as almost to prove itself.—In several very early chess MSS, composed on this side of the Pyrenees, the chess matter is followed by explanations of other table games, such as "tables" and "merelles," but among these additional games draughts is, so far as we know, never found. This strengthens, if that were needed, the existing opinion as to the Spanish origin of the game. The story of the beginning period of draughts, its close connection with chess (as a game of pure skill, into which the element of chance by the use of dice does not enter), and its late appearence in the cis-pyrenæan parts of Western Europe seem to

forbid its identification with "tables," or with the Icelandic "*taft*," to which latter matter, though, we shall again refer.—There is some obscurity about the origin of the continental and therefore earliest appellation given to this chess-derived game—in Spanish, as finally, and exclusively adopted, *juego de damas*; in French, *jeu de dames*; in Italian, *giuoco di dama*; in German, *damenspiel*. Van der Linde ("Geschichte," I, pp. 287 and 321-24) at first thought that the word *dama* formerly signified simply "man" (*i. e.* in a game), but subsequently abandoned—partially at least—that idea ("Quellenstudien," p. 241), although in French *dame*, in draughts, still has that peculiar sense. In connection with the last citation he suggests that it is originally a Provençal derived form of the Latin *domina* (=mistress, lady), but as a chess-term it was first used by the Spaniard Lucena (1497), where it is employed alternately with *fers* (or, as Lucena writes it, *alferezza*), the Asiatic-European title of the piece now known as "queen." Lucena, as the earliest writer on the new or modern chess, styles the transformed game "Queen's chess" (*de la dama*), because of the fuller power given to the old "fers." The chess which was passing away he calls "the old" (*el viejo*). This, of course, gave prominence to the word *dama* (=queen). But it appears probable that the expression "queens' game" (juego de damas), came in part, as is hinted elsewhere, from the adoption of the old move of the chess queen (one square diagonally) as the normal move of each of the men at draughts, but perhaps more from the frequence of "queens," (or crowned pieces) in the new game. In chess, the change which the pawns undergo, on arriving at the eighth rank, is not of very frequent occurrence, and was formerly even less common, while, in that game, the player has the choice among several pieces, the powers of any of which the metamorphosed pawn may assume. In draughts, however, the act of "crowning" occurs in nearly every *partie*, and in many several times, so that each player may easily have, and does have, three or four or more "queens" (or, as we call them in English, "kings") on the draught-board at once. In this light the name "game of the queens" becomes most appropriate.—In the same way but little labour has hitherto been spent in endeavoring to explain the exact propriety of the English name of the game. The earliest distinct allusion to draughts is in the (p. 78) quoted passage from the "Destruction of Troy" (early in the 15th century), where we read:

> The *draghtes*, the dyse and other dregh [*i. e.* tedious] gaumes.

But the game and its name had become very familiar early in the 17th century, when William Perkins, in his work "A Case of conscience" (1619), speaks of "the games of chesse and *draughts*." In France it was described in a book styled "Recréations mathématiques" in 1630 (Rouen), and a special treatise by Pierre Malet, "Le iev de dames," appeared in 1668 (Paris); while in England no book devoted to it saw the light before William Payne's slender volume, "An introduction to the game of draughts" (London 1756). In Germany an inedited MS by Johann Wolfgang Schmidt, composed at Nuremberg in 1700, is preserved in the Royal Library of Berlin, while "Das erklärte Damenspiel" (by an amateur, "F. T. V.") was issued at Magdeburg in 1744. In Holland, a "Verhandeling over het Damspel," by Ephraim van Embden, appeared in 1785, but in all other lands the oldest printed treatise bears a nineteenth-century

date. In Iceland very little was heard of draughts until within the same period, nor is it any way common in the island even now. It came from Denmark, and is usually mentioned by its Danish name (*damm, damspil*). Its Scotch name, *dambrod*, indicates its introduction into that country from France.— Draughts, it may be remembered in conclusion, like all similar games, has its different ramifications, or species. In the United States (notably in the rural districts) is often practised the sort locally known as "give away"[114]— a kind of suicidal draughts, in which each player tries to force his opponent to capture as many men as possible, the real object being to lose the game instead of winning it. To the same genus belong the suicidal problems of chess.—A more important variety is called "Polish draughts," played on a board of 100 squares (10×10), each player controlling twenty men. Van der Linde says that this is the only draughts now practised in Holland—the later treatises on draughts in the Dutch language limiting themselves to this species. No investigator has ever, so far as we know, tried to trace the origin of this so-called Polish game. Whether it came from Poland or elsewhere, it appeared in France a few generations ago, attained a great vogue for a while, and is probably still played. The French chess-players, Philidor, in the last century, and Deschapelles in the present century, were known as adepts at this enlarged draughts.[115]

The word *draught*, or *draft*, besides its various other meanings, has that of "move" in a game, and at a very early period is so used in English chess. Thus we find in Chaucer's "Death of Blanche la Duchesse" (651-654):

> At the chesse with me she gan to pleye;
> With hir false *draughtes* divers
> She stal on me and took my fers;

and in the early years of the 15th Century, in the verse of Thomas Occleve (*b.* about 1370, *d.* 1454):

> And for that among *draughtes* eachone
> That into the chess apertene may,

and only a little later, in that of John Skelton, in his striking piece of imagery drawn from chess:—

> Our days be datyd
> To be checkmatyd
> With *drawttys* of deth.

Draught was a very common word, to express what we now call "move," in all the Old-English productions relating to chess, while its cognate, *drag*, still continues to be used in Swedish in the same sense. Thus in Barbier's "Famous game of chesse-play" (1690)—a revision and enlargement of the

[114] In England (and in American treatises) known as "the losing game."

[115] Books on Polish draughts have lately been published in Germany. Possibly the game was originated at the half-Polish, half-French court of Stanislaus Leczinsky, the exiled king of Poland, (father-in-law of Louis XV), who, from 1736 to 1766, resided at Nancy and Luneville as prince (or "king") of Lorraine and Bar.— Hyde (1694), of course, knew nothing of the Polish game. His treatment of the ordinary game of draughts is, perhaps the most unsatisfactory portion of his two volumes. He makes it identical with the Roman *ludus latrunculorum*, but at the same time seems to think it of oriental origin. He gives representations of two draughtboards, one of which has sixteen men arranged on the first two ranks of each player—in which case use is made, not only of the diagonals but of all the 64 squares of the board (see Hyde, II, pp. 173-195).

earlier work (1614) of Arthur Saul, bearing the same title—we find the following verse referring to the usual mode of deciding the first move by lot:—

> If on your man you light
> The first *draught* shall you play:
> If not, be mine by right
> At first to lead the way.

Now the game of draughts has no checking, no mating, no castling, no variety of movements among its men; hence it is possible to consider it as a simple collection of moves, or as a collection of simple moves—a game of moves and nothing else. This suggestion as to the immediate origin of its English appellation may be a far-fetched one, but no more acceptable explanation can be found in the dictionaries, though the idea is perhaps best of all expressed by Skeat in his well-known "Etymological Dictionary," in which he styles draughts "a game of alternate moves."

Mérelles (mylna). — There are two table games of minor note of which something must be said, chiefly because one of them at least—as we shall learn in the sequel—has been regarded by some writers as related, directly or indirectly, to the Icelandic *hnefatafl*, while both have been practised, for many generations, by the Icelandic people. The first one is, perhaps, best known in general literature by its French name, *mérelles*, or *marelles*. It was intimately associated by the earliest European writers on chess with that game, forming the third of the triad of table games (chess, tables, mérelles) treated by such early writers as Alfonso X, and the authors of the so called "Bonus Socius" and "Civis Bononiae" MSS at Florence, Rome and elsewhere. The last two of these old works, so far as the space they devote to chess goes, have been ably edited and commentated both by Von der Lasa and Van der Linde; but very little attention has been hitherto paid to the portions occupied by the two other games, this being especially true of the *mérelles* section.

We shall nevertheless endeavour to treat this *mérelles* (or "morris-game" as it may be styled, for distinction's sake, in English) with some of its varieties, as completely as we may, considering that no work, or even essay —of a general tenor— consecrated to its history and character has yet been published, and that we must therefore depend upon driblets of information —always scanty of detail, and nearly always inaccurate—drawn from many sources. It ought to be premised that the table game called "morris" belongs to the class which has received the generic title of "line-games," or games in which the men are placed and played on lines and not on spaces (that is, neither on "squares" nor "points"). To this class it is supposed that many games familiar to the older Mediterranean lands appertained. It may be further premised that in the case of the morris game the lines are right lines, and drawn, first, in order to form quadrangles, and, secondly, in order to connect internally the sides and angles of these quadrangles. It may, moreover, render the following pages a little easier of comprehension if we state that it has been surmised, though not proved, that the germ of these games was a single simple square, with lines running from the centre of one side to the centre of the opposite side, and from one corner to the other corner, and that the

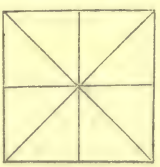


Fig. 1.

line of development which this game subsequently followed increased the number of these quadrangles from one to three, drawn concentrically, or, in some regions, as it would seem, joined by grouping.

We shall put together all that we have been able to gather from different countries—each land by itself—relating to this long-used social diversion—its story, its name or names, its method or methods of play and the part it has had, if any, in each country's literature. The geographical arrangement adopted, however convenient it may be in other respects, has the disadvantage of rendering repetitions unavoidable.

We begin with Spain, because the oldest mention of the game known to us is Spanish, but unfortunately we are not in a position to say definitely what that mention is. It occurs in the important Alphonsine codex of the Escorial (which dates back to about 1280)—its existence therein being positively stated both by Van der Linde and Von der Lasa, but since these writers concern themselves solely with the manuscript's chess pages, they throw merely the faintest glimmer of light upon our topic. The former, in his largest work, ("Geschichte," I, pp. 137 and 279), only informs us that the MS, as left by its royal author, certainly treats of *mérelles* (in German, *mühlenspiel* or *mülespiel*), although Van der Linde himself displays no very exact knowledge of what the morris game is; for, on the last page just cited, he gives, in a general way, the contents of the codex but in a somewhat singular manner. It consisted, according to him, of a series of "spielbücher," "welche erstens das schach, zweitens das trictrac, drittens das mühlespiel (*dados y tablas*) behandeln"—thus seeming to imply that the words *dados y tablas* signify either *mühlespiel*, or both *trictrac* and *mühlespiel*, whereas the word *dados* refers to games played with dice alone, and *tablas* to games played with both dice and men. The indefatigable Dutch scholar, in a later treatise ("Quellenstudien," 1881), comments on the chess section of the codex much more fully than had heretofore been done, having had access meanwhile (not to the MS itself but) to an old transcript of some portions of the Escorial volume. He tells us (p. 73) that one of the games outside of chess described in it, is *alquerque*. This assertion is repeated (pp. 277-8) a little more in detail, and supplemented by this statement: "Auch das mülespiel ist ein linienspiel; Alfonso hat viele varianten und spielt auch hier überall mit schachpeons" (that is, used as morris-men), but we are not told what, according to Alfonso, is the Spanish appellation of "mülespiel,"—of the sort now known to the Germans—nor what the variants are of which his commentator speaks. Of *alquerque* he tells us enough to show that the modern Spanish writer, whom we shall shortly cite, was greatly indebted for the information he gives us, to Alfonso's work. Van der Linde reproduces our figure 1 and informs us that it constitutes a quarter of an *alquerque* board represented in the codex, upon which that game is played with 2×12 chess pawns, placed and moved always upon the lines. Amongst the forms of *alquerque* given is one denominated *iuego de cercar de liebre* ("hare-hunt"). There is also described, as we are told, a more modern variety, which was played with the help of dice—or, as the codex has it, "*alquerque de nueve* que se uiega con dados"—the modern author (Van der Linde) here correcting his former misunderstanding regarding *dados*. He adds that this *alquerque de nueve* was played with twelve white men against one black; but the word *nueve*, although it may possibly signify either

"new" or "nine," is here more likely to mean the latter, (nine men morris), in which case we confess ourselves unable to comprehend the "twelve white men against one black." Thus far Van der Linde. Tassilo von der Lasa, unlike Van der Linde, had the opportunity of examining the codex; the accuracy of the information he gives us can therefore not be questioned. In the pages of that great work, "Zur geschichte und literatur des schachspiels" (1897)—the final and finest product of a long life rich in many abundant literary harvests—he comments on the chess writings of the Spanish monarch. Introductory to his treatment of the subject he says: "Der codex ist ziemlich umfassend und beschäftigt sich neben schach mit verschiedenen spielen, wie würfel, mühle, trik-trak, jedoch nicht mit damespiel. Das schach macht aber bei weitem den grössten theil des ganzen aus" (p. 116).

The only further addition, and that a too slight one, to our knowledge of the Escorial codex, comes from a modern Spanish source. We find it in the remarkable, and, in many respects, valuable treatise of José Brunet y Bellet, entitled "El Ajedrez" (Barcelona, 1890). The volume contains a chapter on the "Libro de don Alfonso el Sabio" (pp. 243-268), in which, however, the author, like preceding writers, has very little to say about any other game than chess. That little occurs when he is describing (pp. 263-4) the miniatures which adorn the XIIIth century MS. He observes that in the supplement (called by Van der Linde "Book IV") are 14 miniatures illustrating some odd varieties of chess, as well as some other games, amongst them five belonging to the pages devoted to *alquerque*, from one of which he quotes this inscription: "Esto es ell *alquerque de doce* que iuega con todos sus trebeios." This means: "This is the *alquerque* of twelve, which is played with all its pieces." "Alquerque of twelve" most likely refers to a kind of *alquerque* played with twelve men. Then the modern writer continues by saying that this game is called in Castilian *tres en raya*, and in Catalan *marro*, "del cual hablamos en capitulos anteriores." He notes that Alfonso speaks of the pieces as *trebeios* (modern *trebejos*), a name which is still sometimes given to the pieces at chess.

Turning next to the anterior chapter to which the author of "El Ajedrez" has alluded, we shall try to give a tolerably complete abstract of its earlier paragraphs, although we shall find but little relating to the actual morris game as we of English speech understand it. In fact all that we may be able to glean in regard to the nomenclature of the Peninsular *mérelles* will not make it possible to draw any certain deductions as to its character, much less to present any clear or logical account of the game as played by the Spaniards, or to comprehend its technical terms. Brunet y Bellet follows his second chapter, in which he treats of "El juego en tiempo di los romanos," with an appendix, or extra chapter (pp. 204-211), which he begins by alluding to the well known work on chess of the Sicilian Carrera (1617) [116] who, he tells us, applied the name of "line games" (*giuochi di riga*, or in Spanish, *juegos de raya*) to all varieties of this category of table games,

[116] "Il gioco degli scacchi di D. Pietro Carrera con due discorsi l'uno del Padre D. Gio. Battista Cherubino, l'altro del Dott. Mario Tortelli. In Militello 1617." The book is one of the classics of chess. The English translation of William Lewis (London 1822) varies in its arrangement and is slightly abridged. Carrera was the last of the great Italian chess writers of the 16th-17th centuries (Polerio, Greco, Gianuzlo, Salvio, Carrera).

amongst them being a kind of draughts (*damas*), played on a table "divided into triangles by lines" as in the existing *marro grande*, and with sixty pieces half white and half black, which is styled [by the ancients] *grammismus* or *diagrammismus* or *gramma*—this last word signifying "any sort of line." "'This game,' says Carrera, 'is to-day unknown, but there was formerly played, and is still actually played, a similar one with twelve white men and twelve black; but it is necessary to note that this game is diverse from that which the Sicilians call *marrella*, and the Spaniards *damas*.' He then describes the method of playing one of the *riga* games, which he asserts is styled *riga di tre*, and which is one that children play everywhere, drawing the board upon a stone, brick or plank, or even marking its outlines on the earth, each player employing three men—never more. This game is called in the Catalan dialect *marro*, and in Castilian *tres en raya*. Carrera comprises under the name of *giuochi della riga* all those games which are played upon a flat surface marked in lines of one form or another, and using a greater or less number of men." The game described by Carrera, as reported by Brunet y Bellet, it will be seen, is the English "three men's morris" (see fig. 1).

In spite of the two argumentative paragraphs which the Spanish writer then bases upon Carrera's use of the word *damas*, it is quite evident that the Sicilian's employment of the term was the result of ignorance, for *damas* means, and meant even in Carrera's time, the game of draughts. Resuming, Brunet y Bellet declares that in the days of Carrera the Sicilians might have employed *marrella* or *marelle* for the Spanish (juego de) *damas*—played on a chess board—but that at the present time the Italians understand by *marelle* the Spanish (juego de) *marro*, that is to say (giuoco de) *riga*, with twelve white and twelve black men, called in Catalan *castro*, a name which is equally applied in Castile to that game. It is also known as *alquerque* or *tres en raya*—just as Carrera calls both the games *giuoco de riga*, and just as the Catalans apply that of *marro* equally to the line-game of twenty four men, and to that of six—three white and three black—the latter being *tres en raya* among the Castilians.

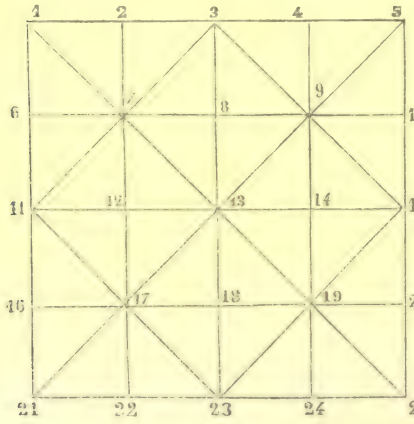


Fig. 2.

All this seems unnecessarily perplexing, but we get from the final lines a clear idea that the simple, single-squared "three men morris" is surely known in Spain. The author, however, makes confusion worse confounded by inserting in his text the design of what he labels a board for "*alquerque* or *marro* of twelve men," which we copy (fig. 2). Now this board is made up by uniting four of the little "three men morris" boards of Tuscany (or Italy, and other lands) or, what is the same, four of Hyde's *copped-crown*

boards,[117] and is different from any of the larger morris or *mérelles* boards which we find elsewhere (excepting in recent manuals of social games published in Paris and Milan, alluded to later). Afterwards he goes on to say that it is very possible that this diminutive *marro* or *giuoco de riga* (that is, a fourth of his *alquerque* board), using only six men (three for each player), its board traversed by four lines and divided into eight spaces, may be the primitive form of the game of lines (*rayas*), from which is derived the other and more complicated varieties of these games. As combinations of this original form he cites the *alquerque* represented in the design; the game called *asalto* in Spanish, and the game called *fox and geese* in English, of the board of which latter he gives a sketch. Later on we shall find fuller mention of this *asalto*, but certainly, as we have already said, it has not been our fortune to discover in actual use in any other country a composite morris board of the character of that asserted to be *alquerque* by Brunet y Bellet.[118] But see the extracts from Italian and French handbooks of games farther on.

The definition given in the "Diccionario de la lengua Castellana por la academia española" to *tres en raya*, under the word *raya*, is as follows: "A game which is played by boys with pebbles or pieces upon a *square divided into four others* [that is lesser ones], having lines drawn from one side or the other to the centre, where they are joined by diagonals drawn from one corner to the

[117] See the subsequent treatment of Hyde's statements in the account of the morris game in England.

[118] The text of the early paragraphs, of which we have made use, in Brunet y Bellet's supplementary chapter, is as follows: "Don Pietro Carrera, ne su obra *Il Gioco de gli Scacchi, In Militello*, 1617, dice: El autor da el nombre de juego de la Riga, Raya, á todos los que se juegan con tableros señalados por rayas, entre ellos el de una especie de Damas jugado con un tablero dividido en triángulos por las rayas, como en el actual Morro grande, y con sesenta piezas, mitad blancas y mitad negras, el cual juego es llamado *Grammismus* ó *Diagrammismus* y *Gramma*, aunque este último nombre significa toda clase de *Riga*, ó Raya—"Este juego, dice Carrera, es hoy desconocido; pero se jugaba también, y ánn se juega actualmente, ontro semejante con doce piedras blancas y doce negras; debiendo advertir que este juego es diferente de aquel otro que los sicilianos llaman *Marrella* y los españoles *Damas*." Describe después el modo de jugar el último de los tres en que divide los juegos de *Riga*, que dice llamarse *Riga de Tre*, y que es el mismo que todavía juegan los muchachos por todas partes señalándose el tablero sobre una piedra, ladrillo ó madera, ó bien haciendo rayas en la tierra, y con tres piedrecitas nada más; juego llamado en catalán *Marro*, y en castellano *Tres en Raya;* Carrera, en una palabra, comprende bajo el nombre de *Juegos de la Riga* á todos aquellos que se juegan con tablero marcado por rayas de una ú otra forma, y con mayor ó menor número de piezas..... En tiempo de Carrera podría llamarse en Sicilia *Marrella* ó *Marelle* á nuestro juego de Damas, con el tablero á cuadros, escaqueado; pero los italianos entienden, aún hoy, por Marelle, nuestro juego de Marro, es decir el juego de Riga de las doce piedrecitas blancas y doce negras, llamado *Castro* en castellano, nombre que se da igualmente en Castilla al que también se llama *Alquerque* ó *Tres en Raya;* del mismo modo que Carrera da á los dos el nombre de Giuoco di Riga, y los catalanes llamamos *Marro* al Riga de 24 piedrecitas y al de 6—tres blancas y tres negras—ó Tres en Raya como los castellanos." In his next paragraph the author goes on to observe: "Es muy posible que este último sea el primitivo de los juegos de rayas, del cual se derivasen los otros diferentes de tablero más complicado ó mejor multiplicado, y con las repeticiones del cuadro primitivo mejor dispuestas, atravesado por cuatro rayas y dividido en ocho espacios, pues no son otra cosa los tableros del *Marro* (fig. 2), Asalto, Ladrones. *Fox and Goose* [see a later page], etc. y es posible y casi probable que las Damas que se juegan con 12 piezas blancas y 12 negras—en España, Francia y otras naciones se juegan con mayor número—no sean otra cosa que el antiguo Marro aplicado al tablero de ajedrez de 8×8 casillas, cuando este juego se vulgarizó por el Occidente"—a valueless guess.

other. The aim of the game consists in the placing, by one player, on some one of these right lines, his own three men, and the skill of the game consists in preventing the other player from accomplishing the same purpose with his men." The Spanish definition is followed, as is customary, in the earlier editions of the Academy's dictionary, by a brief Latin one, which in this case reads: "Puerorum ludus lineis transversis in quadrum dispostis." It will be seen that the Academy's definition seems to be, so far as the board is concerned, a description of the *alquerque* of Brunet y Bellet (four small squares making one large one). *Alquerque*, in the same lexicon, is explained to be identical with *tres en raya*. The incomprehensible thing in the definition just cited is that, while Brunet y Bellet speaks of the board as used for the "*alquerque* or *marro* of twelve men," the phrase "his own three men" (*les tres tantos proprios*), in the Academy (and other late) dictionaries, implies that each *alquerque* player had (as in the smallest morris game) but three pieces — which looks impossible. The statement may be only one of those examples of confusion, through ignorance, on the part of the Academical lexicologists, of which we have already seen so many in this volume.

In the voluminous "Diccionario enciclopedico hispano-americano," recently published at Barcelona, we are referred under *alquerque* to *tres en raya*, and under the last word of that phrase (XVII, 1895) we find this definition: "Juego de muchachos, que se juega con unas piedrecillas ó tantos, colocados en un cuadro dividido en otros cuatro con las lineas tiradas de un lado á otro por el centro, y añadidas los diagonales de un ángulo á otro. El fin del juego consiste en colocar en cualquiera de las lineas rectas *los tres tantos* proprios y el arte del juego en impedir que esto se logre interpolando los tantos contrarios." This, it will be noticed, is almost a word for word repetition of the description given in the lexicon of the Spanish academy, and, as we said in quoting that, though slightly inexact, it certainly refers to Brunet y Bellet's *alquerque* played on four united three men morris boards; it even reproduces the Academy's erroneous "los tres tantos proprios."

Of what we, outside of Spain, understand by the nine (or twelve) men morris, with the board of three concentric squares, we discover nothing certainly in the recent lexicographical works which relate to the Spanish language. As to another word cited by Brunet y Bellet, *marro*, its sole signification known to the present generation is as the title of an athletic sport described in the "Diccionario enciclopedico" in these words: "Juego que se ejecuta hincando en el suelo un bolo ú otro objeto, y, tirando con el marrón, gana el que lo pone más cerca." The dictionary of the Academy under *marro*, gives, not only the game here mentioned, but another plainly more violent athletic exercise, in which one band of players confronts another in a sort of tournament. It seems, therefore, that as the name of a table-game, *marro* is no longer used in Spain, unless dialectically.

Hyde, one of the historians of chess, in his chapter entitled "Historia triodii"—of which we shall have a good deal to say when we reach the subject of the morris game in England—remarks that certain writers state that the game is called in Spain *alquerque*, but that some other writers, and among them Corvarrubias, apply that name to chess, or draughts, but that *alquerque*, as he proposes to show afterwards, is the Arabic name of *mérelles*. "From this we can form an idea" says the wise Hyde, "how great are the errors of authors in assigning and explaining the names of games."

Little information, but an abundance of misinformation, as to the game is to be drawn from the larger and better bilingual dictionaries of the present time. For instance, in recent editions of Salvà's French and Spanish dictionary (1898), we have, in the French part, *mérelle* (singular) interpreted by *tres en raya*, "juego de muchachos," while the plural *mérelles* is rendered by "*cinciacos* (otro juego di muchachos)." *Tres en raya* can surely not signify the French *mérelle* (singular). In the Spanish part we find *alquerque* rendered "mérelle, espèce de jeu de dames"—a repetition of an old piece of inexactness criticised and condemned even as far back as the days of Hyde. Under *tres en raya* again we find the definition, *mérelle*, "jeu d'enfant qui consiste á sauter á cloche-pied en poussant avec le pied dans un sens prescrit un palet en des lignes circonscrites: ces lignes elle-memes." This is only a blunder in the French-Spanish part repeated. We can find nowhere that *tres en raya* ever has in Spanish the meaning of the French *mérelle* (singular), which is properly that of the English children's game, "hop-scotch."

In considering finally the whole question of the morris game in Spain, one is almost inclined to think that of the two forms of the larger *mérelles* involving three squares, one drawn within the other, neither has ever existed in that country. We find, for instance, that no one of those who have written about the codex which owes it existence to Don Alfonso gives any hint of the treatment of either of these forms in that famous work. Von der Lasa, in noticing other early codices, often alludes to the presence or absence of the morris positions, and occasionally characterises the game found in them as the "larger" *mérelles*. He has however nothing to say about any mention of the game as he understood it, in the Escorial MS; but the strongest negative evidence is that of Brunet y Bellet, who supposably has had frequent opportunities of studying the royal compilation. He takes pains to copy in his book the board of four united squares (*alquerque*), and we may reasonably suppose that had there been any markedly different kind of what he follows Carrera in calling *juegos de raya,* he would have also reproduced the board upon which it was played. Certainly, as has been already hinted, we discover no trace in the Spanish lexicological works of any other sort of *mérelles* than the three men morris and its quadruple, *alquerque*. If it be indeed true that Spain has never got beyond the three men morris and the composite *alquerque*, that fact will have great weight in discussions upon the origin of the game, for apparently this shuts out India and Arabia as probable home-lands of *mérelles*. Still, in this connection, one thing must be much more carefully considered than has hitherto been the case, and that is the derivation of the word *alquerque*. The latest Spanish authorities make two rubrics of this vocable. Under the first it is referred to *tres en raya* as a synonym, in the second we are told that it signifies the space in an oil mill into which the "must" of the olive is placed between the two pressures which it undergoes. Both are explained as coming from the same Arabic root, or possibly from two Arabic words of intimate connection. The first syllable is the article *al* (*el*), the other, *kark* or *karik*. The editors of late issues of the Spanish Academy's dictionary think that the Arabic root might mean "flat surface." From the interrogative sign which follows this etymological suggestion—which however is omitted by later makers of dictionaries—it would appear that the question has not been very thoroughly investigated. We can therefore only treat it in a purely guess-work way, and say that,

if the Spaniards adopted an Arabic name for a certain flat surface to be found in oil mills, and if they then applied that name to a game played on a flat surface (perhaps largely on the "flat surfaces" of the oil mills themselves), it would hardly be considered an invincible argument for the eastern origin of the game.

If in Italy the *mérelles* game is not heard of quite so early as in Spain, yet it is not far behind in point of time; while, on the other hand, it seems to have been cultivated in the central Mediterranean peninsula to a greater extent than in the western, and elaborated into a pastime of higher distinction. Its first mention, so far as we know, is in the works of the pseudonymous "Bonus Socius" and "Civis Bononiae"—writings which have been happily criticised by Van der Linde as the "Académies des jeux" of the middle ages, since in them are treated the three most esteemed table-games of that remote day. Nicholas de (Saint) Nicholai, who called himself "Bonus Socius," if not an Italian, of which there seems to be little doubt, was at least a resident of Northern Italy; though it is proper to add that no place called San Nicola (or Nicholai) has yet been identified as his possible home within the limits of the Italian territory. If this "Saint" were omitted, Nicola di Nicola would be simply "Nicholas, the son of Nicholas," or in English "Nicholson." In his brief general preface to his compilation, he tells us that his book treats "tam de ludis scaccorum, alearum, quam ab etiam marrellorum." To be specially noted here is that the last word is not feminine, but is written as if derived from the singular "marrellus" or "marrellum;" Von der Lasa, indeed, cites an old plural, *merelli*.[119] The *Ludus alearum* was of course the game of tables. Many transcripts of the Latin text of this work are in existence, and not a few codices of the French rendering in Florence, Rome, London, Paris, Brussels and Wolfenbüttel. The German translations are in the shape of extracts or abstracts.

Not very much later came the second similar production—that of the "Civis Bononiae," who not only informs us that he is a citizen of the North Italian Bologna, but also records his name in some enigmatic verses prefaced to his work, concealed, however, in so clever a way, that none of the many who have studied the lines have succeeded in drawing aside the veil.[120] Transcripts of this work, also in Latin, are not uncommon, but, unlike its predecessor, it has never been rendered into any modern tongue. In one of the later codices we find the title given as "Tractatus partitorum scacchorum, tabularum et marellorum." *Partitorum* has the meaning, in all the three

[119] See the "Festschrift" of the Academic Chess Club of Munich (1896, p. 37), in an essay by Von der Lasa on mediæval chess, including an admirable account of the early MSS from that of Alfonso on.

[120] For these Latin rhymed stanzas, which are six in number, see Van der Linde's "Quellenstudien" (pp. 183-184). The lines bearing upon the author's cognomen and residence are those of the fifth stanza and the first line of the sixth:

Hec huius opuscoli series est tota.
Quis sim scire poteris tradens tot ignota.
Versum principiis sillabas tu nota
Eorundem media littera remota.
Civis sum Bononiae ista qui collegi.

There are many of these enigmatic utterances in mediæval Latin literature. It would seem as if one familiar with that field might interpret the sense here concealed.

games, not of *parties* but of "positions"—positions, or problems, in chess coming first in both of these early compositions, followed by like positions in the games of tables and *mérelles*. In one of the "Bonus Socius" Latin MSS at Florence, if we understand Van der Linde's account of it correctly, ("Quellenstudien" p. 184) the author, in addition to his "ludus marellorum," enumerates several other names given to the game; *tavella*, *tria*, *filetto*. *Tavella* may or may not be a misunderstanding, but the Latin "*tria*," like the Greek τριοδιόν, is found with this meaning in some dictionaries, while *filetto* is in Italian one of the ordinary modern appellations of the game. The surprising thing is that this last name should go back, seemingly, to the XIVth century. In that age, to judge by these illuminated records, our morris game had a splendour to which in later times it has never attained. For the codices of these North Italian "Académies" are in general handsomely, even luxuriously, executed, with miniatures and other brilliant displays of colour. Those of Italian execution are even outdone in this respect by some of the French vellums. It is plainly to be seen that they were intended for the use of courtly circles, or for the homes of the nobility—*mérelles* in the XIVth and XVth centuries, thus sharing the aristocratic associations to which chess and tables had long before become accustomed. When we look, however, at one of the redactions of the "Civis Bononiae,"—the remarkable volume belonging to the Victor Emmanuel library at Rome—we are struck at once by the appearance of the pages devoted to the *mérelles* game. The exterior lines of the board are often, by a sort of double lineation, drawn in two colours. The *mérelles* pieces, in those days, had their own peculiar names, something after the manner of those used in chess. Each player ruled over the movements of "moons," "stars," "shields," "crosses," "squares," and "rounds" (or discs). The *moon* is designed as a crescent orb; the *star* has long, shimmering rays; the *shield* is triangular; the *cross* is of the Greek form; the *squares* and *rounds* are not outlined, but are solid bits of colour. In Latin these names are *luna*, *stella*, *scutum*, *crux*, *quadratus*, *rotundus*. Generally, in these codices, the collection of *mérelles* positions begins, without any title, or prefatory remarks, with the conditions of the first problem, as in the Paris Latin MS (National Library 10287—formerly 73190, pp. 173-184)—one of a very gorgeous character: "*rubei primo trahunt et rubeus rotundus nunquam movebiter, nisi semel; et si bene ludatur neuter vincit.*" The final position in the volume bears the following inscription: "*Si aurei trahunt suam crucem, rubei revertentur cum quadro, et capient scutum, vel e converso; si trahunt lunam, rubei capient stellam vel e converso; et postea in omni tractu capiet quadrus, et vincient rubei.*" It will be seen that the players (or their men) are styled red and gold instead of white and black, as at chess, which increases the magnificence of the diagrams, even if it does not add to the dignity of the game.

It is remarkable that a casual examination of several of these MSS, which, although at first composed in Latin, originated in mediæval Italy, and many of which were written down by Italian scribes, should yield such a scant amount of information as to the rules of the game. The names given to the pieces are, as we have said, six in number. If the names were not duplicated, this would seem to decide in favour of six pieces for each player, thus not according with any variety of *mérelles* known to us. But some of these pieces are found occurring twice in a single position, and it looks as

if some of them (namely the "squares" and "discs") sometimes occupied the board even to the number of three or four. So far as we have been able to ascertain, none of the solutions given help us more than very slightly as to the character of the play. We are told that the gold takes the moon, or that the red captures a cross, but by what sort of movement this action is performed, we cannot always even guess. The same is true of the positions given at the game of tables, and we may almost say the same of the chess problems, except that in the last case we are aided by many other old records relating to the game. Possibly a wider study of this singular production, especially of its little known versions in French, might aid us in ascertaining the number of men and the laws of the game.

After this period of brilliancy, *mérelles*, so far as we can learn, drops out of literature in Italy, but the game continues to be played by the people in more than one of its forms. Without recourse to the dialects, we find the following appellations given to it in the encyclopedias and dictionaries: *giuoco di mulino*, *tavola di mulino*, *filo*, *filetto*, *tavoletta*, *smerelli*, *filo-mulino*, *scaricalasino*, and *mulinello*. Some of these evidently relate only to the "three men morris," or the smaller mérelles, such as *tavoletta*, *scaricalasino*, *mulinello*, while others, like *filetto*, are seemingly used for any of the varieties. *Scaricalasino* (literally "unload the ass") may have suggested itself from the similarity of *molino* (mill, *mulino* being an alternative orthography) and *mulino* (little mule)—asses and mules being, too, the customary carriers of corn to the mill. Now-a-days, we believe, *scaricalasino* is more often employed in the sense of the English "leap-frog," just as *mérelles* (*mérelle*) in French has come to be the name for "hop-scotch." Apparently, too, the compound *filo-mulino* is the title of a frequently occurring position in the game, but has grown to be used occasionally of the game itself. The most singular word in this list is perhaps *smerelli*, which occurs in the XVIIIth century, and possibly still earlier. Whether it be allied to *mérelles* we are not informed; even in the pretended etymological dictionaries no derivation is suggested. It is noteworthy that the appellation *mérelles* ("ludus marellorum"), which occurs in the very first writings on the subject composed in Italy, should not have found its way into the Italian language as well as into the French. In regard to this, as to other related matters, it is to be hoped that some Italian linguistic scholar will be able to carry these hasty researches to a more satisfactory result.

Giovanni Gherardini, in his "Supplimento a vocabolarj Italiani" (III., Milan, 1854), gives the phrase *giuocare a filetto*, of which he says: "Ho udito dire in Toscana *e' giuoca a filetto*, per significare che parco e stretto vive in tutte le sue cose con molta economia. Lo scherzo consiste su 'l *filare sottile;* o pure è tratto da un giuoco di questo nome, detto altramente *giuoco di smerelli* o *tavola di molino*, e presso i Francesi '*jeu de mérelles.*'" In the "Dizionario della lingua Italiana" of Tommaseo (1869), the largest work devoted to the vocabulary of the Italian tongue, we find under *filetto*: "Chiamasi così una sorta di giuoco detto anche *giuoco di smerelli*"—citing here as an authority Fanfani, a contemporary lexicographer. This is followed by a few lines endorsed by the initials of one of the editors (Meini) explaining "giocare a filetto:" "il qual giuoco si fa su una tavola simile alla Dama, dove sono segnati *dei quadrati* sopra alcuni dei quali, chi giuoca cerca di disporre tre pedine in fila; nel che consiste la vincita. *Far filetto. Ho fatto filetto.*" In

saying that *mérelles* is played on a board like a draught-board, the writer ought to tell us how great is the similarity he wishes to imply. In the case of these two games, both boards (like all other boards) are flat, and it is also true that both are quadrilateral in shape. Here certainly their similarity ends.

The modes of playing the various sorts of the morris game now prevalent in Italy, may be gleaned from a very recent publication of the "Hoyle" or "Académie des jeux" class by J. Gelli, entitled "Come posso divertirmi?" (Milan 1900). It includes *fox-and-geese* in its chapter devoted to "Il mulinello" (pp. 226-233, figs. 103-107)—but that game we shall examine in subsequent pages. In the German dictionaries we sometimes find the word *doppelmühle*, or the *double-morris* game, played on an enlarged board, and having a greater number of men and "points" than the simpler game. In the same way, the Italian writer styles his various kinds of *mérelles* simple *mulinello* (*mulinello semplice*), double *mulinello*, and so on. The simple sort is, of course, the three men morris, of which we have the following description (see fig. 1): "The game of *mulinello* [literally "little mill"], a diversion for children when it is simple, for adults when it is complex, is styled also (*giuoco del*) *filetto* and (*giuoco della*) *tavola*, and is played, in all its varieties, by two persons. The *mulinello semplice* board is formed by the sides of a square, by interior diagonals, and by two medial lines parallel to the sides. The points at which the lines intersect, or join each other, are nine in number, and represent the 'squares' (or 'points' occupied by the men). The board may be drawn on paper, on the ground, or on the flat surface of a table; the two players furnish themselves each with three pebbles, three small balls, or three pawns (counters) of different colours, so that those belonging to the two adversaries be easily distinguishable. The first player is decided by lot, and in successive *parties* the winner of the preceding encounter has the opening play. The opening player places a man on one of the points, the second player one on another, and so on. The first combatant having entered all his men, when it next becomes his turn, moves one of them, following always the lines, and going from one of the nine "points" to an adjoining one. His adversary does the same, and the game continues until one of the players succeeds in ranging his three men in a line, either right, horizontal, vertical or diagonal. The game ought to be won by the first player, provided he places his first man at the central point, as it rarely happens that the first pawn or man played by his adversary ever succeeds in securing that point.

The *mulinello doppio* has a board with which we have never chanced to meet in Italy, or, in fact, anywhere else—except in some very recent publications like the present—although the compiler of the book claims for it great antiquity. It is composed of two concentric squares (that is, one within the other). The space between these squares is divided by twelve right lines into twelve small squares, the points at which the lines join being twenty-four in number, giving that number of "points" or "houses" for the men (fig. 3). But we will repeat the author's description in full: "The *mulinello doppio* was a favourite enjoyment of the ancient Greeks. The board is composed of two concentric squares, the space between them being divided into equal quadrangular portions by [twelve] right lines, which join the other lines at twenty-four points, forming therefore twenty-four 'points'

for the men. Of the latter, each player is provided with five of the same colour (different, however, from the colour of those of his adversary), which he arranges on the five points of one side of the larger or outer squares (20, 21, 22, 23, 24). On the opposite side of the larger square the adversary places his (1, 2, 3, 4, 5). Each then advances his men, alternately, from point to point, always following the lines, and when one of the players has enclosed one or more of his adversary's pieces (rendering it impossible to move it farther), the man is considered captured. The game is ended when one party—therefore the winner—has captured all the men of his opponent."

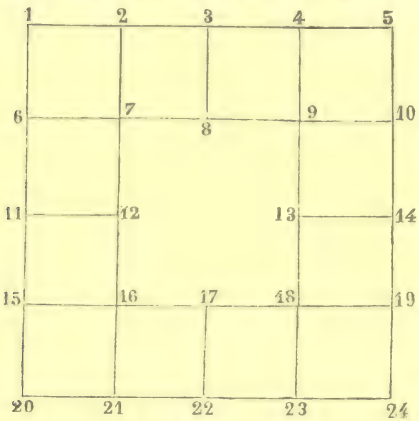


Fig. 3.

The *mulinello triplo* is the morris board commonly used in America, but which seems to us to be infrequent, at the present time, in Europe, especially on the continent, having not only the right lines which connect the middle points of the lines forming the squares, but the diagonals joining the angles. The description is: "The board is formed of three concentric squares with parallel sides [see fig. 4]. Eight lines unite the angles and the middle-points of the sides. Once this game enjoyed an extraordinary popularity—so great that even now it is found drawn on the opposite side of many chess boards. Each player has nine men (in colour unlike those of the other player) and places, or enters them, alternately with his adversary, upon any of the twenty-four 'points' formed by the intersecting lines. Then, by successive moves, he tries to form a *filetto*, that is, a line of three men, of the same colour, arranged either horizontally, or vertically. This line is called a *filo*, or *filetto*. Every time a player makes a *filetto*, he can select and remove from the board one of his opponent's men, respecting, however, those with which his adversary has already formed a similar *filetto*. When a player has no more than four men left on the board he is declared the loser."

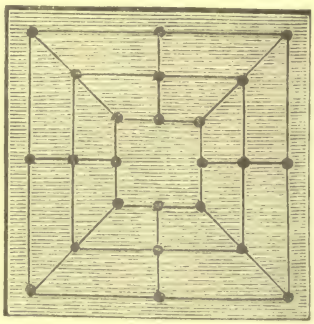


Fig. 4.

The *mulinello quadruplo* is, singularly enough, the *alquerque* of the Spanish writer, Brunet y Bellet [see fig. 2]. "It is formed," says the Italian compiler, "of four *mulinelli semplici*. Each player has five men, and the game is won by him who places all five in a straight line." The number of "points" is twenty-five. The author of this new Italian "Hoyle" commits an evident blunder or two. In his *mulinello doppio* he says that the number of lines forming the small squares is nine, whereas a glance at his board would have shewn him that they were twelve. He apparently has no knowledge of the board (three concentric squares without the diagonal lines drawn

from the angles), which is the sole one given in the early MSS, and which, in at least the greater part of Italy, is the one to be found on the reverse of the chess boards sold at the shops [see fig. 5]. We know not, therefore, how much of his information is to be regarded as trustworthy. We fear that for some of his material he has gone into foreign fields—plainer indications of which we shall soon meet with.[121]

In contrast to the statements of this very recent publication, we find in another late work, "Il libro dei giuochi," (Florence 1894), no knowledge either of the so called *mulinello doppio*, the *mulinello triplo* (twelve men morris), nor the *mulinello quadruplo* (*alquerque*). The compiler of "Il libro" treats only of the simple three men morris and the antique large morris game—as Von der Lasa styles it,—which appears in the XIVth century MSS, that is, lacking the diagonal or corner lines. The writer says that "on the back of every chess board is seen inlaid or traced the figure of the *filetto*, a game of great simplicity. It is played with nine white counters and nine black, by two players, that one winning the game who succeeds in first placing three counters in a row upon one and the same line. And this is the way of it. Each, at the beginning of the game, has his men outside of the table; one of the players first places a man upon any one of the twenty-four points of the board, an advantage which, in commencing the game, is decided by lot; at the subsequent games, he who has just lost enters his counter first. Next, the other player places one of his men; then the first again, and so in sequence until all the nine are entered. Afterwards each

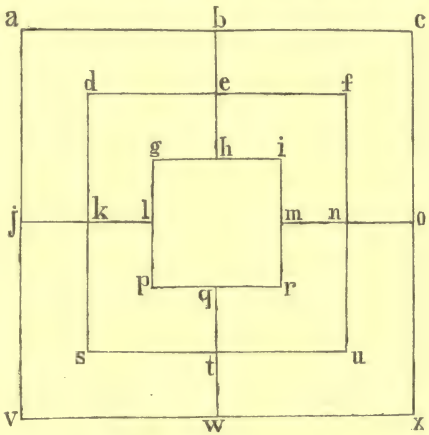


Fig. 5.

[121] As the manual is the freshest, as well as the most complete Italian work of its character, we copy complete its section relating to this class of line-games: "Il giuoco del *mulinello*, giuoco da fanciulli quand' è semplice, da adulti se complesso, vien detto anche del *filetto* e della *tavola*, e si giuoca in due. 1. Il *mulinello semplice* è formato dai lati di un quadrato, dalle diagonali e dalle due linee mediane, parallele a' lati (fig. 1). I punti, dove le varie rette si intersecano, rappresentano le caselle, e sono 9. Tracciata la figura sopra un pezzo di carta, o sopra il terreno, o sopra il piano di una tavola, i due giuocatori si muniscono ciascuno di tre sassolini, di tre pallottole, di tre bottoni o di tre pedine di colore diverso, perchè riesca facile distinguere quelli che appartengono piuttosto all' uno che all'altro dei due avversarî. La sorte decide chi è *di mano* al principio del giuoco. Nelle successive *ha la mano* il vincitore dell' ultima partita. Il primo che giuoca pone una pedina sopra una casella, il secondo sopra un' altra e così di seguito per turno. Quando il primo giuocatore ha messo tutte e tre le pedine, quand' è di turno, muove una di esse, seguendo sempre una delle linee tracciate, e di casella in casella. L' avversario ne fa altrettanto, e il giuoco continua fino a tanto che uno dei due giuocatori riesce a disporre le sue tre pedine sulla stessa retta, orizzontale, verticale o diagonale. La partita generalmente è vinta dal primo giuocatore, se colloca la pedina nella casella centrale (see fig. 1), e perciò, quasi sempre resta stabilito che la prima pedina giuocata da ciascuno degli avversarî non può collocarsi al centro.

2. Il *mulinello doppio* è rappresentato dalla figura 3. Gli antichi greci vi si dilettavano assai. Si compone di due quadrati concentrici e a lati paralleli, collegati tra di loro da

one moves alternately a counter one step, in whatever direction along the lines, endeavouring to make a *filetto* (*far filetto*), that is, to place three counters on one line, and to prevent his adversary from doing the same. Naturally one player may be able to complete a *filetto* even before he has entered all his men, if, by oversight, his adversary does not cover the third point of a line on which the former has already entered two counters." The only error noticeable here is the assertion in the first lines that he who first places three men on the same line wins the game. But the writer's subsequent description shews that this is merely a bit of carelessness. The writer finally says that there is a more simple *filetto* game—and here he gives a representation of the three men morris board [fig. 1]—"which is played with three white and three black men, in an analogous manner, but mostly by children." We must content ourselves with the citations we have made in reference to the existing state of *mèrelles* in Italy. Of course our investigation has been in no wise thorough. There is a large literature devoted to social games; only a few of the works which it embraces having come under our notice. From many provinces we have been able to gather no reports—in fact all that we have stated with any definiteness relates principally to Tuscany and Lombardy. But what we have brought together leads us to believe that the ordinary three men morris game, and the ordinary nine men morris game—the board having no diagonal lines—are pretty certainly still known in most parts of the peninsula. Some of the other varieties—treated in the very modern works on games—may be of long standing and popular in portions of the Italian domain, but we have discovered no certain evidence of it.

In glancing at the morris play in France, we ought properly to follow the plan pursued in our remarks on this game in Italy, and begin with the French version (or versions) of the treatise ascribed to Nicholas de (Saint) Nicholai ("Bonus Socius") which furnish here, as on the Italian side of the Alps, the earliest information on the subject. The notices relating to the French codices, however, are very few and very scant. That the compilation

[12] rette, che s' intersecano in 24 punti, formando perciò 24 caselle. Ciascun giuocatore è provvisto di 5 pedine di uno stesso colore, ma diverso da quello delle pedine avversarie, che dispone sopra le caselle di uno dei lati del quadrato grande. Sul lato opposto l' avversario distribuisce le sue. Di *mossa* in *mossa*, alternandosi i giuocatori, fanno avanzare le loro pedine, seguendo sempre le linee, e quando uno ha fatto prigione una o più pedine avversarie, costringendola a non più muoversi, ne fa preda di giuoco e la *mangia*. La partita è vinta da colui che ha *mangiato* tutte le pedine avversarie.

3. Il *mulinello triplo* è rappresentato dalla fig. 4. Risulta formato da tre quadrati concentrici co' lati paralleli. Otto rette congiungono gli angoli e le metà dei lati. *Una volta* questo giuoco godeva di un favore straordinario, tant' è, che pure oggi si trova disegnato sopra le *dame*, dalla parte opposta alla scacchiera. Ciascun giuocatore dispone di 9 pedine di colore diverso di quelle avversarie, e le colloca, alternandosi con l' avversario, sopra una delle 24 caselle, formate dall' incontro delle varie rette. Quindi, con mosse successive cerca di fare *filetto*, di disporle, cioè, in maniera che tre pedine dello stesso colore formino una *linea orizzontale* o *verticale* detto *filo* e *filetto*. Ogni volta che un giuocatore fa *filetto*, a sua scelta prende una pedina avversaria dal giuoco, rispettando, però, quelle che formano un *filetto*. Quando un giuocatore non ha più che quattro pedine è dichiarato perdente.

4. Il *mulinello quadruplo* risulta formato da un quadrato che comprende quattro mulinelli semplici. Ciascun giuocatore dispone di cinque pedine e vince quegli che per primo riesce a collocarle d' acchito o con mosse successive, tutte e cinque in linea retta, orizzontale, verticale o diagonale (fig. 2). The paragraphs which follow, relating to fox-and-geese, we cite on a later page.

as rendered into French, was popular, is shown by the number of transcripts still existing, but how much of this popularity was due to any one of the three games therein treated—rather than to any other—it is of course impossible to say. The earliest French codices date from the very first years of the XIVth century, and none is later than the XVth. Two are preserved in Paris, one in Montpellier, another in the invaluable collection of books at Wolfenbüttel, founded by the duke Augustus of Brunswick-Lüneburg, who himself compiled the library's first catalogue, and who, under the pseudonym of "Gustavus Selenus," composed the great folio on chess which was published in 1616.[122] Another of these French codices—all of which are vellums—is in a private collection in England. So meagre is our information in regard to them, that we are only certain of one thing, namely, that the rather fantastic names given to the *mérelles* men in the Latin MSS were retained. This we learn from a casual citation of two of these pieces' names, *estoile* and *quaree*, found in the Fountaine MS—the one preserved in England.

And now as to the French appellations given to the game—a matter, the elucidation of which has its difficulties. The word *mérelles*—the most common designation—is derived by the French etymologist Scheler from the Latin—more immediately from the low Latin. He says: "Le mot *mérelle* ou *marelle* signifie proprement le palet, le pion ou le jeton, dont on se sert pour le jeu; feminin de *méreau* (bas Lat, *Mérellus*); on le rattache à un type *matrellus*, *matrella* (d'où *mairellus*, *marellus*), qui serait un derivé du Latin *matara*, *mataris*, sorte de javeline, mot d'origine gauloise, et dont la racine, à juger du gaél *methred*, 'jaculator,' exprimait l'idée de jetter." The final portion, especially, of this etymological note can hardly be called precise in its treatment of the vocable's early history.[123] The writer's definition of the morris game is even more unsatisfactory, since he ignores the old game, or *mérelles* proper, entirely, and mentions only the children's out-of-door game, which the French style also *mérelle(s)*, but which is known in English as "hop-scotch," an athletic diversion practised in the open air upon a sort of board outlined on the ground, or floor. Littré is more diffuse. For the sake of exactitude and convenience we copy from his massive dictionary the whole section devoted to *mérelles*, including definition, description and etymology. We shall see, in a later page, that definition I refers to the lesser *mérelles*, and definition II to the larger, or double *mérelles*. But to proceed with the quotation: "Anciennement, table carrée, sur laquelle des lignes partant *des angles ou du milieu* de chaque côté et se réunissant au centre, indiquaient la place que devaient occuper, et la route que pouvaient suivre les marelles ou méraux; jeu qui se jouait sur cette table; nom des jetons employés à ce jeu. II. Nom d'un jeu, qui se joue avec les pions et aussi avec des petits cailloux de diverses couleurs; il consiste d'un figure formée d'un grand carré, plus un carré plus petit renfermé dans le précedent.

[122] "Das schach- oder Koenig-spiel: Von Gustavo Seleno, in vier verschiedene bücher," Lipsiæ 1616. The work is largely a translation of the Italian version of the chess treatise by the Spaniard Ruy Lopez (1584). Gustavus Selenus is a pedantically formed anagram of the author's name and title. Compendiums of this work, under a variety of titles ("Pythagoras rythmomachie," "Ludus latrunculorum," "Palamedes redivivus," "Selenus contractus" and the like), formed the principal hand-book of chess in Germany during the 17th and the first half of the 18th century.

[123] This etymology goes back, as we shall see, to Hyde, the English orientalist, and even to a period much earlier.

plus un petit carré qui occupe le centre de ce dernier; une ligne partant du milieu de chacun des côtés du grand carré vient se terminer aux côtés du troisième et petit carré; cette figure est tracée sur un carton; quelquefois les enfants la tracent sur le sable ou sur une pierre. Le jeu de la marelle consiste à aligner sur une seule ligne les trois pions. III. Par assimilation de figure, jeu d'enfants fait en manière d'échelle, avec de la craie, où les joueurs, marchant à cloche-pied [=hopping], poussent du pied qui saut un petit palet dans chaque espace de l'échelle; la figure même qui est tracée sur le sol." The third definition, as will be noted, is the sole one known to Scheler,—our hop-scotch.

In his supplementary remarks, Littré tell us that, of the two orthographical forms, *mérelle* and *marelle*, the former is the older. He has derived his definition I, and taken the history of the word in French, from an interesting volume by La Borde entitled "Notice des émaux du musée du Louvre" (Paris, 1853, II, p. 381). We cite La Borde's historical note on the name in full from his own work: "Ce même mot avait servi antérieurement, c'est à dire à partir du XII^{e} siècle, à désigner les médailles ou la monnaie de convention, de plomb, de cuivre et quelquefois d'argent, dont chacun avait droit de faire usage; à l'église, pour constater la présence des moines aux offices; au marché pour prouver l'acquittement d'un droit; dans les travaux et les ateliers, pour représenter, à la fin d'une semaine, les prix des journées, et à autres usages. C'était en réalité la suite et l'équivalent des tessères de l'antiquité, et ces méreaux restèrent dans la langue et dans l'usage jusqu'au XVIII^{e} siècle. Ils étaient faits en carton, en cire, en plomb, en cuivre; les marelles à jouer étaient le plus souvent d'ivoire et d'os; on en a fait aussi de divers bois."

As to the etymology, Littré is very brief; he remarks that the game was "ainsi dite de *mareau*, ou *méreau*, ou *merel*, palet. Dans plusieurs provinces on dit *marène* pour une fausse assimilation avec marraine." Under the word *méreau*, to which he thus refers us, we find the following still briefer etymology: "Bas Lat. *merellus*, dont l'origine est inconnue."

In section I of Littré's definition he states that the lines described on the square start *des angles ou du milieu de chaque côté*, and unite in the middle. As he speaks of but one square, it is evident that he is speaking of the little (or three men) morris, and the conjunction *ou* should therefore be *et*. In his section II, the definition is a very clear description of the older, or most used form of the larger morris (sometimes called the double morris), for we find in it no mention of diagonal or corner lines. But at the end of this section comes a striking bit of inaccuracy. The lexicographer states that the game of mérelles consisted in placing in a row (*aligner*) on one and the same line "les trois pions." But for the morris board which he has been describing, not *three men* but nine are necessary. He has confused the nine men morris with the three men morris explained in the preceding section. As to section III, relating to "hop-scotch," it is quite certain that the sport received its name from the resemblance of the design drawn on the ground in order to play it, to the lines of the morris board. It must be remembered too, that the morris game was also sometimes played out of doors, its board being likewise marked out on the turf or pavement, and perhaps on a largish scale, so that this fact very likely had its influence in conferring upon the French "hop-scotch" the name of *mérelle*, *mérelles*. There is

a good deal of irregularity about it, but it seems as if an effort is made by the French to use the singular (*mérelle*) for "hop-scotch," retaining the plural (*mérelles*) for the table game, although the distinction, if it exist, is often lost sight of.

One of the most important French and Italian dictionaries (that known as "Le nouvel Alberti" 1855, edited by Ambrosoli, Arnaud and other Italian scholars), informs us that in French "le jeu de mérelle s'appelle aussi le *jeu du moulin*." This would appear to be confirmed by Von der Lasa in his "Zur geschichte und literatur des schachspiels" (in a foot note, p. 145). He is criticising the French journal, "Le Palamède," for saying (1837, p. 82) that the game of *mérelles* is no longer known or understood. He adds that the "Complément du dictionnaire de l'Académie" (Brussels 1853, p. 648) "sagt ganz richtig: 'Grand jeu de la mérelle; s'appelle aussi le jeu du moulin.'" It is worthy of note that the dates of "Le nouvel Alberti" and the Brussels supplement to the French Academy's dictionary are within two years of each other. We have never happened to see the morris game styled *jeu de moulin* in any French writing outside of these dictionaries; still Von der Lasa's assertion may be correct, or he may, possibly, have in mind the Italian name.

The game enters much more into the literature of France than into that of any other land; historical references to it, too, are more numerous. It has even been argued that Nicholas de (Saint) Nicholai was of French birth, partly on account of the way in which his name is given in the French versions of the "Bonus Socius" compilation, but this, as we have stated, is more than doubtful. We record here all the citations concerning *mérelles* in mediæval France, and in the earlier modern period, which we have been able easily to gather. One of the oldest is from a poem by Eustache Deschamps, a rhymer who was born in the first half of the XIVth century; he played a rôle of some importance during the reign of Charles VI, and died during that of his successor. He exclaims in one of his compositions:

> Gieux de dez et de *merelles*,
> Vous soit toudis deveables.

Much later is an anonymous "Moralité des enfants de Maintenant," which we cite from Viollet Le Duc's "Ancien théâtre français" (Paris 1854-57, III., p. 52):

> *Finet:*
> Jouons au jeu de la *merelle*,
> Je suis las du franc du carreau.
>
> *Jabien:*
> C'est bien dit; le jeu du *mereau*
> Est bien commun; si est la chance.

A sure sign of the former popularity of the game in France, is the number of common phrases which have their origin in the practise of the diversion. There is a proverb, *mestraire le merel*, the sense of which is "to play a losing game," "to meet with a reverse;" we find it in the old rhymed "Chroniques des ducs de Normandie" by Benoit, which we have already cited (see p. 72), in which we read:

> Sempres i eust *mereau* mestrait,
> E a Gui ten damage fait,
> Qui ne fust pas dil an entier
> A restorer sain ne leger.

The proverb is again employed in an old anonymous "Vie de St Gilles:" [124]

> Or en penst Deus ki lagarisse!
> Si ankes plus tost ne s'en veit,
> Ja erent li *merel* mestreit,

and again, about the same time, in the "Miserere" of Renclus de Moliens: [125]

> Viens tu jeur au tremerel
> A mort, ki ne mestrait *merel*.

In addition to this proverbial phrase, *mestraire le merel*, which refers rather to the piece than to the game, we have others like *traire de bonne mérelle* "to make a good stroke," "to withdraw fortunately from an affair;" *traire fausse mérelle*, "to play badly;" *traire sauve mérelle*, "to play without loss:" *ne plus traire point ne mérelle*, "to play no longer;" *changer la merelle*, "to change luck," ("to alter the face of things"); *avoir la mérelle*, "to have the advantage."

It is notable too that only in France do we come across a special word for the mérelles-board, namely, *marellier* or *marelier*—formed like *échiquier*, *tablier*—cited in several early poems and prose writings, as, for instance, in a morality styled "Le pélerinage de l'âme:" [126]

> Gieus de tables et d'eschiquiers,
> De boulles et de *mérelliers*.

In his "Notice des émaux," La Borde thus defines the marelier: "Table carrée sur laquelle des lignes partent des angles ou du milieu de chaque côté en se réunissant au centre: elles indiquent la place que doivent occuper et la route que peuvent suivre les trois méreaux ou marelles: le gagnant doit aligner sur une seule ligne les trois jetons: on nomme encore ce jeu carré chinois." This recalls Hyde's assertion that the three men morris is a very common game in China. Mérelles boards are frequently mentioned in old inventories and elsewhere, especially in the XVth century. We hear of one in 1448 which belonged "à M. D. S." [that is, *mon dit seigneur*, le duc d'Orléans] "pour jouer aux mereles dedans le bateau." The inventory of the goods of the duc de Berry, drawn up in 1416, mentions at least two méreliers, the first is "Une très belle table, ployant en trois pièces, en laquelle est le merelier, deux jeux de table et l'eschiquier faiz de pourfiz de Romme, jaspre et autres pierres de plusieurs couleurs." The other seems to have been of simpler materials: "Une table de bois marquetée de jeu des eschas et de tables et de mareliers (marelles?) et y sont les tresteaux tenant à la ditte table."

Du Cange (IV, 1845, p. 157) quotes, with the date of 1412, a statement from which we may infer that the game was once named *ludus sancti Mederici*. It occurs in a French document existing in the Paris archives, and tells us of one "Jean Aysmes, qui avait joué aux merelles a six tables, appelle le jeu saint Marry," but who St. Medericus (Mederic?), or St. Marry was, and why his name was given to the game, we have been unable to learn; it may

[124] See the edition by Michel (II., lines 865-66).

[125] This should be found in Van Hamel's edition, but the reference we have at hand (CCX-7) seems to be erroneous or incomplete.

[126] Edited by J. J. Stürzinger (1895): its author was Guillaume de Guileville (often cited as "Deguileville").

perhaps be attributed to the resemblance of the two names, Marry and mérelle, since in those devout days every profession and occupation had its patron saint. In the statutes of several French cities occur mentions of *madrellum*, *marella* (*ludere ad marellas*), one of them bearing the date of 1404. In some of these documents we have the game and the board mentioned together, as in one dating from the year 1414: "Icellui Estienne prist lors toutes marelles et les getta jus du marellier."

The little work of Bulenger on games (cited later) has a very brief description of the simplest mérelles. He is writing in France in the first quarter of the XVIIth century. He says that the morris was then a diversion of French boys: "Hodie pueri apud nos ludum Madrellarum usurpant, in quo quatuor lineæ quadræ foris, quatuor alias lineas includunt, quæ media linea quasi diametro secantur, et tres unus ex collusoribus bacillos totidem alius variis locis collocant, et id studiosé agunt, ut tres bacillos suos in eadem linea continuent."

Probably the fullest account of modern *mérelles* in France is found in a pretentious compilation, issued not very long ago at Paris under the title of "Grande encyclopédie des jeux par T. de Moulidars." "Les marelles ou mérelles" occupies some pages and is, perhaps, the source from which the editor of the recent Milanese work of a similar character drew his materials. The arrangement in the two manuals is the same, but the French work is somewhat more complete in its descriptions, and, at the risk of much repetition, we shall give the text in full. We have first the marelle simple (see fig. 1): "Ce jeu enfantin, ancêtre probable des dames, est formé par les quatre côtés d'un carré et par les deux diagonales et les deux lignes médianes parallèles aux côtés. Les points d'intersection de ces huit lignes forment neuf cases. Cette figure peut être tracée sur un papier ou simplement sur le sol. Les joueurs, au nombre de deux, possèdent chacun trois pions ou trois cailloux de couleurs différents ou d'une forme reconnaissable. Le premier joueur pose un pion sur une case, le second sur une autre et ainsi de suite alternativement. Quand un joueur a posé ses trois pions, il en déplace un, pour le porter sur une case immédiatement voisine en suivant l'une des lignes; son adversaire en fait autant de l'un de ses pions et la partie continue ainsi jusqu'à ce que l'un des joueurs arrive à mettre ses trois pions sur une même ligne droite, horizontale, verticale ou diagonale. Le premier, en se plaçant d'abord au centre de la marelle [that is, at the point of intersection of all the lines, see fig. 1] ne peut manquer de gagner, s'il joue convenablement; et l'on convient ordinairement qu'il n'aura pas le droit de poser, au début, sur le centre du jeu." There is nothing to object to here, except the phrase at the beginning, "ancêtre probable des dames"—a title which, as we have seen, belongs not to *mérelles*, but to chess. But writers not overburdened with erudition cannot forget that the *mérelles* board is to be often found depicted on the reverse of the chess-board, and that the chess-board is used for the game of draughts; so they fancy that there must be some subtle connection existing between the morris-game and draughts.

We next have the double *mérelles*, with a reproduction of the figures which we have numbered 3 and 4: "La marelle double ou *pettie* des anciens grecs est représentée par notre fig. 3. Elle se compose de deux carrés concentriques et à côtés parallèles, réunis par neuf [douze] lignes, de manière à former 24 cases [points for the pieces]. Chacun des deux joueurs possède cinq pions

d'une couleur reconnaissable, et les place sur les cinq cases [or points at the junctions of the lines] de la ligne supérieure ou de la ligne inférieure. On pousse alternativement les pions en avant, de case en case, en suivant les lignes. Quand un joueur a enveloppé une ou plusieurs pièces de l'adversaire de façon à les empêcher de bouger, il les enlève du damier; et la partie continue jusqu'à ce que l'un des joueurs n'ait plus de pions. Il est probable que la *pettie* est le veritable jeu de Palemède, dans lequel les historiens ont cru voir les échecs ou les dames." The writer then refers to the triple mérelles, represented in figure 4: "La marelle triple, autrefois si populaire, est tombée dans un état d'oubli qu'elle ne mérite pas. On la dessine ordinairement sur le sol et quelquefois sur une table, sur une ardoise ou sur un carton. Elle se compose de trois carrés ayant un centre commun et les côtés parallèles (fig. 4). Des lignes réunissant les quatre angles et les quatre côtés des carrés. Chacun des deux joueurs a 9 pions d'une couleur ou d'une forme reconnaissable et les pose alternativement sur l'un des points de rencontre des lignes, comme à la marelle simple; après quoi, il les déplace un à un, en les portant sur une case immédiatement voisine et en suivant l'une des lignes. Son but est d'amener trois de ses pions sur une même ligne droite; quand il y est parvenu, il prend dans le jeu de son adversaire, un pion à son choix parmi ceux qui le gênent le plus. Quand un joueur n'a plus que quatre pions, il n'est plus astreint à marcher de case en case; il peut faire franchir à ses pions une ou plusieurs cases occupées, afin de se mettre sur une station inoccupée quelconque. Le premier qui n'a plus que deux pions a perdu la partie. On convient quelquefois que pour former une ligne donnant droit à une prise, il faut que cette ligne ne soit pas une diagonale." "Therefore," continues the writer, "a line formed by pieces placed on these diagonals, that is to say, at points of intersection which are not made by lines meeting each other at right angles, are not regarded as giving the right to capture an adversary's man." This last feature, as will be noted, makes the board (fig. 4), for general purposes, a nine man morris-board, instead of a twelve men morris, as the shape would indicate. We are thus led to the idea that the latter differs from the former (the true old form), in giving the increased chances to each player of using four additional (diagonal) lines for the formation of "mills," but that sometimes, in order to maintain, to a certain extent, the resemblance to the antique game, it is agreed that "mills" may be laid out on those diagonal (or corner) lines, but that such "mills," unlike the others, shall give the party making them no right to capture one of his enemy's men. Nevertheless, as we may understand it, these additional lines would still be of some advantage for purposes of play. There seem then to be—taking the United States into consideration—two modes of using the twelve men morris board—one being to play with nine men (as in the old boards without diagonal lines), the other to increase the number of pieces to twelve.

It is to be observed that this French writer ignores the genuine old morris-board of the 14th century MSS (our fig. 5), without the diagonals connecting the angles, evidently knowing as little about it as does his Milanese imitator. He proceeds, therefore, at once to treat the variety which he denominates the quadruple game (the *alquerque*): "La marelle quadruple (fig. 2) est formée par la juxtaposition de quatre marelles simples. Chacun des deux joueurs possède cinq pions, qu'il pose successivement sur l'un des

points de rencontre des lignes. Pour gagner la partie, il faut arriver le premier à placer ses cinq pions en ligne droite." It should be observed that with what appears to be a disproportionate number of men (five to a board four times as large as that for three men morris) there are twelve lines upon which "mills," or rows of five men each, can be created: the three men morris players, in the simplest board, have eight lines at their disposal on which to arrange themselves. From the bareness and brevity of this description, it seems very evident that the compiler has no very clear idea of the *alquerque*, of which we have been unable to find any account anywhere else in a French book. Then follows, as in the Italian manual, the notice of fox-and-geese, or *marelle quintuple*. We cannot help thinking that the editor of this French manual has been largely influenced by the desire to bring together all the line-games of the morris kind which he could collect from similar books in all languages and to classify them, rather than to give us those must used in France. He has, however, omitted the simplest of all the forms, the "noughts and crosses" of English boys (the "tripp, trapp, trull," of the Swedes). Meanwhile the apparent fullness of his hand-book has led to its translation, as we have already seen, into Italian, and as we shall hereafter see into Swedish—possibly, too, into other tongues.

In England the game of morris must have existed at an early date, since we have the orthographic form *merils* from the middle English, but it is not easy to discover any reference to it before the days of Shakespeare. The name shows that it must have come directly from France, or at a very early date from Italy, since we find no trace of an appellation having any such meaning as "mill." The derivation from the French seems the more likely, since, if it had come from the Italian, at a time when the Italians used the Latin denomination (*merellus*), the Icelanders would no doubt have borrowed both the game and its name, as in the case of chess, from Great Britain. But the Icelandic denomination belongs to what we may style the "*mill*-class" of names, showing that the game came from some other land than England. It is remarkable that England has produced the only account of the game which lays claim to any historical, philological, or philosophical value—that of Hyde. To that account we shall return, after an examination of the now adopted etymology of "morris."

Some of the English etymologists have connected the word with a vocable of the same form found in the English compound "morris-dance," thus deriving it from the Spanish *moro*, *morisco* ("*moor*," "*moorish*"), which would, if the derivation could be established, go far towards indicating an Arabo-Spanish origin for the game. Hyde gives a great number of appellations bestowed in England upon the sport and its varieties, such as *bushels* (or *bushel*), *marlin*, *three men's morals*, *nine men's morals: nine penny miracle*, *nine pin miracle: three penny moris*, *five penny moris*, *nine penny moris: three pin merells*, *nine pin merells*. Some of these names assume their special forms from the fact that the game was frequently played with pennies, with pins, or with tokens, instead of the usual round counters or men. It is probable also that the names with the numerals "three" and "five" refer to the simple or other smaller merelles. "Morals" is, of course, a closer form of the French *mérelles*, and helps to demonstrate the more modern theory of the etymology of "morris." "*Bushels*" and "*marlin*" do not occur, so far as we know, in any recent literature, and are pretty

certainly not known in America. In England, at present, the most usual name is "nine men's morris," but in America, and particularly in New England, it is better known as "twelve men's (or men) morris." As to the latest etymological authorities, the "Century" dictionary, after giving the variant *merels*, cites the old French "*mérelle*, the game, nine men's morris, French *mérelle*, *marelle*, hop-scotch; middle Latin *merellus*, *marallus*=counter, token, also a piece in draughts." Then the dictionary quotes from Strutt's "Sports and pastimes:" "Marelles, or nine men's morris, as it was formerly called in England, is a game of some antiquity." The Century dictionary closes its meagre rubric by describing the game as "played with eighteen pieces or stones, nine on each side."

In a late edition (1891) of Webster's dictionary occurs a very concise description of the game: "The figure consists of three central squares with lines from the angles of the outer one to those of the inner, and from the middle of each side of the outer square to those of the inner. The game is played by two persons with nine or twelve pieces each (hence called "nine men's morris" or "twelve men's morris.") The pieces are placed alternately, and each player endeavours to prevent his opponent from making a straight row of three. Should either succeed in making such a row, he may take up one of his opponent's pieces, and he who takes off all his opponent's pieces wins the game." Here we have almost the only, and certainly the first mention of the game by its most common New England name, "twelve men morris," and also the only hint we have found in print that the more complicated of the morris boards — with the diagonal lines (fig. 4)— is used with twelve men, instead of nine, on each side. Whether this has ever been the case, with the same board, in Europe, we have no means of verifying.

The game enjoyed all its old English popularity in New England, although we have never heard of its practice there as an out-of-door diversion. The strict religiosity maintained in the British colonies known as New England long prevented the introduction of card games, while chess seems to have been almost or quite forgotten by the emigrants and their descendants until late in the 18th century. For these reasons draughts, morris and fox-and-geese became the popular amusements in the farm-houses and villages of the new English-speaking world.

Long before any other European scholar thought it worth his while to investigate the history of chess and other table-games, appeared the learned work of Thomes Hyde — a man of exceptional note in his day. He styles himself "Linguæ arabicæ professor publicus in universitate Oxon., probibliothecarius Bodlejanus." He was really England's earliest oriental scholar, and in the originality and high character of his researches has hardly had an equal in England, except, perhaps, Sir William Jones. His book is in two volumes, and, like so many of the publications of its time, abounds in title-pages. The general title, forming a sort of bastard title-page before the real title-page of volume I, is "De ludis orientalibus libri duo." The title-page of volume I begins "Mandragorias seu historia shahiludii, viz. ejusdem origo, antiquitas, ususque per totum Orientem celeberrimus;" this volume is accordingly devoted to the story of chess among the Eastern nations. The second volume is styled "Historia nerdiludii, hoc est dicere, trunculorum." The second part is therefore occupied with the games

of "tables" (*nerdiludus*, the Perso-Arabic *nard* or *nerd*), dice, draughts, and other table games, among them being our morris-game, which has a chapter devoted specially to it entitled "Historia triodii."[127]

We shall endeavour to give a sketch of the more important points in Hyde's essay, omitting much that refers only to the game in oriental regions. He sets out by telling us that the game was well known to the Romans, but that he has been unable to find out the name by which they distinguished it. He says that Bulenger, a French scholar, in his book on games, treats of *mérelles*; and that he informs us that it is called *madrellæ* because *materes* signifies pieces of wood (*baculi*) according to Nonius, whence to-day the Gaelic word *matras* signifies an arrow as being a piece of wood. The old author Sisenna, Bulenger declares, relates that in Gaul they fought with *materes*, that is long darts. He tells us, too, that Cyril, in his Greek glossary, gives the same explanation of the word *materes*. Cæsar also, in his "Commentaries," notices the *materes*, which were used in battle. Thus far Bulenger.[128] Hyde, however, dissents from the derivation and says that the letter *d*, upon which the whole Bulenger etymology depends, does not belong to this root hence the word *marell* cannot be deduced from *materes*. Moreover, at present an arrow is not called *matras*, but *matlas*. This subject is pursued at some length by Hyde in a later note, which takes the form of a paragraph in the "elenchus" prefixed to the volume, in which he seems to think that the word *matras* or *materes* has been introduced as a military term among the Persians and the Turks. Hyde goes on to say that the pieces with which this game is played are called in France *mérelles*, or *marelles* as Rabelais writes it, and *marellæ*, or, as Bulenger interpolating a *d*, puts it less correctly, *madrellæ*. Sometimes in France these pieces are made of wood, and sometimes indeed stones are used. Cotgrave (the author of the dictionary) translates them *pedites*—stones: the game is sometimes played with pebbles. Cæsar Oudin (*d.* 1615), a royal interpreter in France and compiler of various grammars, tells us, not very properly, that in Spanish the game is called *juego de tablas o piedras*, because it is sometimes played with stones (*piedras*). Oudin elsewhere reports that some-

[127] The publication of Hyde was issued at Oxford in 1694, and is really in four parts. The first part, of 72 unnumbered pages, consists principally of an excursus called "De shahiludio prolegomena curiosa;" followed by a second section of 184 pages, "Historia shahiludii;" then come 71 pages, "Shahiludium Traditum in Tribus Scriptis Hebraicis," being the productions of Abraham ibn Esra and Bonsenior ibn Ja'hja, together with the anonymous treatise, "Ma'adanne melech" ("Deliciæ regum"), in all of which both texts and versions are given. This completes the first volume. The second, besides 16 pages of prefatory matter, contains 278 numbered pages, and is devoted to the minor table games. The chapter on the morris game occupies pp. 202-214. The volumes are profusely illustrated with engravings and folding plates, and have now become somewhat rare.

[128] The treatise of J. C. Bulenger (1558-1628), "De ludis privatis ac domesticis veterum," was published at Lyons 1627. We have already extracted from it his brief description of *mérelles*. Here is his philological note in the original: "Madrellas, inquam, nostri vocant, quia materes sunt baculi, auctore Nonio, unde et apud nos hodiéque vox gallica *matras* sagitian significat, quasi baculum. Sisenna vetus auctor Gallia materibus, id est, talis oblongis pugnat" (pp. 13-14). Bulenger taught, at different periods, at Paris, Toulouse and Pisa. L. Cornelius Sisenna was a miscellaneous writer of his day, producing works on the story of his time and a commentary on Plautus, among other things. He died about A. D. 120. Nonius Marcellus was a Latin grammarian who lived in the 4th or 5th century after Christ, and the note on *materis* probably occurs in his tractate "De proprietate sermonis."

times in Spain this game bears the name of *alquerque* (which he afterwards falsely translates as the French "esches" and "damas"). He adds that it is "un jeu qui se fait avec des gettons," which seems a concise description of this game. A similar error is committed by Covarruvias when he restricts this name of *alquerque* to the game known as *las damas*, that is draughts. This *jeu de mérelles* is denominated by certain of the Italians *giuoco di smarelli*, the oldest use of that word which we have noted. But later on Hyde remarks that, in the vulgar Italian, the name of *marellæ* is *tavola da molino*, which accords with its German appellation, *mulen* (*mühlen*) or "dupel-mulen" that is "dupla molina," perhaps because the lines upon the board resemble the little grooves which are found upon the upper surfaces of mill-stones. Hyde gives this etymological suggestion, but does not regard it as satisfactory. He says, however, that one of the English names is *bushels*, the singular of which, he thinks, was applied to the middle or central part of the board—used perhaps to impound the men captured—and bushel in Latin is *modius:* he seems therefore to believe that there is a connection between the German *meule* (as he writes the word *mühle*), the French *milieu*, and the Latin *medium* or *medius*, and that the latter has been confounded with the Latin *modius*, from the signification of which the name *bushels* has resulted in English. He dwells on this theme for some time, and then tells us that the smaller morris game is called by the Dutch *driestricken*, and the larger *negenstricken*, the former signifying three lines and the latter nine lines. He writes the latter element of these words *sticken*, which we find in no dictionary. Among the Germans the name *nulochen*—as he writes it (*neun löcher?*)—meaning nine places (*novem loca*) is applied to the minor morris game, and the name *dupel-mulen* to the larger game, as above stated. In his next paragraph, Hyde gives the various English names, stating that all the forms, *morols*, *moris*, *merels*, are corruptions of the French appellation, but we have already cited his list in full. Then at the end he gives us this somewhat remarkable statement about the game amongst the children of Salisbury: "Nam hic ludus à pueris Salopiensibus exerceri solet, ducto humi schemate, in cujus angulis impacti sunt tot *paxilli lignei* ["wooden pins"] qui dentibus extrahendi præscribuntur. Cùmque in humum adigi soleant tam alte ut ne vix restet extremitas extra humum visenda, difficile erit dentibus apprehendere, nisi priùs ore applicato ad instar canum terram rodant eámque rodendo avellant, priusquàm talem paxillum dentibus tangere liceat." Among the Greeks, as Golius in his Arabic lexicon notes, the name of the game was τριόδιον. "I suspect, says Hyde that the true reading is τριώδιον, that is trivium or *triplex via*, the reason of which name will be seen when the board is examined." The remainder of the first section in Hyde is devoted to much polyglot information about the name of the game in Russia, Armenia, among the Arabs—which gives him a chance of referring to *alquerque* once more—the Turks and the Persians. The second section is wholly occupied with the board, its character and origin. He also cites various descriptive passages from oriental writers.

At length the author (p. 210) gives us two drawings of the two best known forms of the major *mérelles*, namely, the one now used in America (which we are inclined to call, as the New Englanders do, "twelve men morris"); and the original *merelle* or *marellæ* of the mediæval MSS (exclud-

ing the diagonal lines). He says of the former that it consists of twenty-four lines, a number obtained by counting the divided exterior lines of the three squares occasioned by the intersections from the sides and angles. He states that the intersections of these lines form the playing points. Many of the orientals omit some of these lines, which run towards the centre, especially those leading from the angles—by which he means that he has not found the twelve men morris in Eastern works. He asserts that the Armenians, the Arabs of the Holy Land and of Mesopotamia, as he has been informed by Jeremiah the Greek priest, all use the board indicated in our ancient European MSS. He tells us that among the people he has just mentioned, the board is formed by boys on the soil, either by cutting the turf, or by drawing lines in the dust. Adults have a board on which the lines are drawn in chalk, or are marked out on a table, or with ink on paper. Then follows what we have named the three men morris board, over which he places its title in Chinese characters. This Chinese game, we are informed, being the simple morris (fig. 1), is practised in many parts of Europe, and European names are given to it. Among the Chinese it is called *Che-loo*, that is, "six places." The Persians likewise know it, the game in that part of Asia being played with six pieces, from which it gets its local name. The Irish call it "*cashlan gherra*," which would be in English "short-castle." In Cumberland and Westmoreland the name "copped-crown" is common, and elsewhere in England it is sometimes drawn with a round prison in the centre—a receptacle for captured pieces.

After all this, Hyde begins to tell us about the method of conducting the game, saying that it is played with coins, beans, pebbles, pegs, dice or pieces of wood, each player's men being different in colour. The country boys play the game on the ground. At first they decide by lot who shall begin, and he whom fate favours can place his pieces where he pleases, this being considered a great advantage. The wise ones begin by placing their men in the centre square, and try to take possession of that portion of the board; for he who controls that should always win, as those who often play the game know. Occupying this central place is called by the French *mettre à cuire*, as if they were placing something to be cooked in an oven. When it has been decided among the players who shall play first, then each one places his pieces singly and alternately in the angles; each player at the same time trying to prevent the other from forming a line with his men, for whoever obtains such a series can take up a piece from his adversary, wherever he pleases, and place it in the prison. This throws light upon the well known passage in Ovid from which it appears that the Romans played the game each with three men:

> Parva tabella capit ternos utrinque lapillos,
> In quâ vicisse, est continuâsse suos.[129]

Hence, too, among the moderns, this game is called "Lusus Ternarius," a name thus descriptive of the minor form of the game. If a table of the larger

[129] Von der Lasa has a masterful essay "Ueber die griechischen und römischen spiele, welche einige ähnlichkeit mit dem schach hatten," which was published in the "Deutsche Schachzeitung" (1863, pp. 162-72, 198-99, 225-31, 257-64), and which well merits reprinting in German and translation into English; but a considerable part of it is copied by Van der Linde ("Geschichte," I., pp. 40-47). It is the first time that the theme is treated by a scholar perfectly familiar with chess, and chess history. In the course of the paper he says

mérelle is used, the competitors have nine men or pieces, and these are placed, as before, singly and alternately in the 24 angles or intersections of lines, leaving vacant six. The author, as it will be seen, is here referring to the board divided by diagonals as well as by right lines. In placing his pieces, each one selects at first the central places. Although neither of the players obtains a line or series of three men, nevertheless the process of playing is continued, and after all the men have entered the board they begin

that the *parva tabella* of Ovid was nothing else than "three men morris:" "Unter der kleinen tafel, auf der beiderseits, wie Ovid 'Ars amandi' (III. 365, *capit ternos utrinque lapillos*) noch ausdrücklich wiederholt, mit drei steinen gespielt würde, ist wol nichts anders zu verstehen, als die jedem schüler heut bekannte *kleine mühle* [little morris game]. Das brett hat 9 felder [the angles and the central intersection], und wer seine steine darauf in eine reihe bringt, gewinnt. In der schwedischen 'Husbibliothek för sällskapsnöjen' (1839, II., 65) ist dies spiel als *tripp, trapp, trull* beschrieben." To which Van der Linde adds that in Holland the smallest morris is called *tik, tak, tol.* As regards these latter assertions, it is necessary to say that both the Swedish and Dutch terms refer to what the English style *noughts and crosses* — a different diversion, though really a line game of the morris order. The literature relating to the table-games prevalent in the ancient Mediterranean nations is a large one. Among the more important treatises — besides that of Boulenger — are: J. Meursius (Mercier) — "De ludis Græcorum" (Leyden 1622); F. de Ficoroni — "I tali ed altri strumentj lusorj degli antichi Romani" (Rome 1734); J. Averani — "De calculorum seu latrunculorum ludo," published separately perhaps, but certainly to be found in the author's "Monumenta latina postuma" (Florence 1769); Paschalis de Petro "Dissertatio de alea et aleatoribus (Rome 1792). Much information is to be gleaned from C. Schönhardt's "Alea: über die bestrafung des glückspiels im älteren römischen recht" (Stuttgart 1885). A most important, as well as, in its way, a most impressive gleam of light is cast upon one of the commonest table games of Rome by B. Comparetti's essay "Su di un antico specchio con iscrizione latina," which was first published in the "Rendiconti della reale accademia dei Lincei" (17 Febbraio 1889). The mirror has on its reverse, a graceful and attractive design of two personages playing the game of *duodecim scripta*, the board plainly visible. Above is the Latin inscription "Opinor devincam." The board is not unlike the mediæval "tables," of which the modern representative is backgammon — a fact which adds a new difficulty to the question of the origin of that game. The mirror was found at Palestrina, and is in private possession. Senator Comparetti's treatment of this singular bit of antiquity is, as usual, a perfect piece of work. Something on the subject of the games of antiquity may be gleaned from Stewart Culin's "Chess and playing cards" (Washington 1898), a profusely illustrated descriptive catalogue of games of all ages and lands exhibited at Atalanta, Georgia, in 1895, by the United States national museum. The compiler boldly asserts that "The game of *duodecim scripta*, 'twelve lines,' was substantially the same as our backgammon. It was played upon a board with twelve double lines, with fifteen white and fifteen black men; the throws were counted as we count them; the 'blots' might be captured; the pieces (whether they started from home or not) had to be brought home, and the winner was he who first cleared off his men. The principal variation from the modern game lies in three dice being employed instead of two." Several treatises relating to the sports of antiquity will be found in the great "Thesaurus" of Gronovius, in which some we have mentioned, like those of Boulenger and Meursius, are likewise printed; worthy of note are those by Calcagnino — "De talorum ac tesserarum et calculorum ludis," and Senftleben "De alea veterum." Students of chess history are sufficiently familiar with M. A. Severino — "Dell'antica pettia" (Naples 1694); and D. Souter — "Palamedes, sive de tabula lusoria" (Leyden 1622) — also one of the Gronovius tracts. J. Christie's work on the game invented by Palamedes is treated in a later note. Then there is an extensive modern work by Becq de Fougières — "Jeux des anciens" (Paris 1873); but care must be taken in searching this bibliographical field, for many books nominally relating to games have nothing to do with table games. An article on "Latrunculi," in a dictionary of antiquities now publishing, cites K. Richter — "Die Spielen der Griechen und Römer" (Leipsic 1888), of which a French version ("Jeux des Grecs et des Romains par Bréal et Schwob") appeared at Paris in 1891, a work devoted almost exclusively to athletic sports. A recent English book of some pretention, E. Falkener "Games ancient and oriental" (London 1892), is of slight importance. It may be remarked that the material in museums, particularly that which has resulted from the excavations of the last quarter of a century, has not yet been at all adequately treated.

to move reciprocally on the lines between their positions, and in this way each one tries to destroy his adversary. This among the Turks is called *var u ghel*, "go and come." It is not permitted to either to move at first to remote parts of the board, but both must proceed thither step by step; each man occupying, if it be vacant, the angle next to him, although this limitation is sometimes removed when one of the players has but four men left. Of course he who has lost all his men but two, with which he cannot form a ternary line, in which act the whole *ratio ludi* consists, must consider himself conquered.

Hyde has a final short paragraph devoted to the origin of the game. We gather from it that "the game is well known both in the east and in the west, and originated, it seems, among the Arabs or the Persians, whence it was carried to other nations. Its name is treated as a common and evidently familiar vocable in Arabic vocabularies composed 700 years ago, in one of which we find the statement that '*al tobna* est ludus persice dictus *sidere*;' but it was really an every-day amusement among the Romans 1700 years ago, as we have learned from Ovid, who lived not long before Christ, and if so familiar then, it must have certainly been much older." In this last utterance Hyde's usual wisdom deserts him, and he ventures to indulge in that mode of writing history by guess-work, in which he has been imitated by not a few moderns in their treatment of chess.

The standard authority on popular English diversions is the work of Joseph Strutt, "The sports and pastimes of England," which first appeared in London in 1801. It has passed through various editions, and well deserves another, with such revisions and additions as recent investigations can afford. The edition we are using is that of 1830, edited by William Hone, in his day a great student of the popular archæology of England. We reproduce the whole of the brief section entitled "Mérelles—nine men's morris" (pp. 317-8): "Mérelles, or, as it was formerly called in England, nine men's morris, and also five penny morris, is a game of some antiquity. Cotgrave describes it as a boyish game, and says it was played here commonly with stones, but in France with pawns, or men, made on purpose, and they were termed mérelles; hence the pastime itself received that denomination. It was certainly much used by shepherds formerly, and continues to be used by them, and other rustics, to the present hour. But it is very far from being confined to the practice of boys and girls. The form of the mérelle table, and the lines upon it, as it appeared in the XIVth century is here represented (see fig. 4). These lines have not been varied. The black spots at every angle and intersection of the lines are the places for the men to be laid upon. The men are different in form or colour for distinction's sake; and from the moving these men backwards or forwards, as though they were dancing a morris, I suppose the pastime received the appellation of nine men's morris; but why it should have been called five penny morris, I do not know. The manner of playing is briefly this: two persons, having each of them nine pieces, or men, lay them down alternately, one by one, upon the spots; and the business of either party is to prevent his antagonist from placing three of his pieces so as to form a row of three, without the intervention of an opponent's piece. If a row be formed, he that made it is at liberty to take up one of his competitor's pieces from any part he thinks most to his own advantage—except from a completed row, which

must not be touched if there be hostile piece on the board that is not a component part of that row. When all the pieces are laid down, they are played backwards and forwards, in any direction that the lines run, but can only go from one spot to another [adjoining?] at one time; he that takes all his antagonist's pieces is the conqueror. The rustics, when they have not materials at hand to make a table, cut the lines in the same form upon the ground, and make a small hole for every dot. They then collect, as above mentioned, stones of different forms or colours for the pieces, and play the game by depositing them in the holes in the same manner that they are set over the dots upon the table." Strutt closes his description with the citation from Shakespeare—or rather a portion of it—the whole of which is reproduced on a later page. The fantastic explanation of the word morris, which the author gives, shows how easy it was to fabricate etymology in those convenient days which preceded the rise of the historic school of philology. As we have already hinted, his idea was, for a while, the prevalent theory of the origin of "morris"—whether as the name of the social table game, or as the appellation of a certain sort of dance. Hone—and indeed Strutt as well—with the word "merelles" before their eyes, in the title they gave to the section of their work which related to the morris game, seem to have had no notion of any connection between the French and English names. Nor have they any more definite idea of the history of the amusement than that it "is a game of some antiquity."

Just prior to the date of Hone's edition of Strutt, there was a periodically published work, in several volumes, entitled, "The every-day book." It was mainly the production of the same William Hone, and may be regarded as a not unworthy predecessor of the modern "Notes and Queries," though its operations were devoted to a sphere much more limited. It is a vast treasury of notes on the traditional customs and manners, the ancient sites and edifices, the curiosities and superstitions of England. In one of its volumes there is a communication under the signature of "P" and the date of July 1826, addressed to the editor on the subject of a rustic amusement styled "Ninepenny Marl," which reads thus: "There is an ancient game, played by the shepherds of Salisbury Plain, and village rustics in that part of the country, called 'Ninepenny Marl.' Not having read any account of it in print, I hasten to describe it on your historical and curious pages. Deciphering and drawing lines on the sand and ground are of great antiquity; and where education has failed to instruct, nature has supplied amusement. The scheme, which affords the game of 'Ninepenny Marl,' is cut in the clay (see fig. 5) or it might be drawn upon the crown of a hat with chalk. In cottages and public houses, it is marked on the side of a pair of bellows, or upon a table, and, in short, any plain surface. 'Marl' is played, like cards, by two persons; each person has nine bits of pipe, or wood, so as to distinguish his from those of the opponent. Each puts the pipe or stick upon one of the points or corners of the line, alternately, till they are all filled. There is much caution required in this, or your opponent will avail himself of your error, by placing his man on the very point which it is necessary you should occupy; the chief object being to make a perfect line of three, either way, and also to prevent the other player doing so. Every man that is taken is put into the square till no further move can be made. But if the vanquished be reduced to only three, he can hop and skip into any vacant place, that

he may, if possible, even at the last, form a line, which is sometimes done by very wary manœuvres. However simple 'Ninepenny Marl' may appear, much skill is required, particularly in the choice of the first places, so as to form the lines as perfectly and quickly as possible. This game, like cards, has its variations. But the above imperfectly described way is that to which I was accustomed when a boy. I have no doubt that many of your country readers are not wholly ignorant of the innocent occupation which 'Ninepenny Marl' has afforded in the retirement of leisure attractions."

The correspondent terminates his note with an expression of his own "strong recollections of the game." His letter calls out another dated from London, "Ludgate-hill, 10th November 1826," and signed "T. B." The writer says to the editor (who publishes the piece under the title of "Nine Men's Morris"): "I was much pleased on reading and being reminded of an ancient game in your book, called *Ninepenny-Marl;* a game I had scarcely heard of during the last twenty years, although perfectly familiar to me in my boyish days, and played exactly the same as described by your correspondent 'P.' I have since visited my native county, Norfolk, and find the game is still played by the rustics, and called, as it always has been there, 'the game of *Morris*,' or 'Nine Men's Morris.' The scheme is frequently chalked on the ground or barn floors, and the game played with different coloured stones or beans. I think the name is more appropriate than 'Ninepenny Marl;' and moreover, we of Norfolk have the authority of our immortal bard in his 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' where the queen of the fairies, speaking to Oberon, says: 'The Nine Men's Morris is filled up with mud.' There are some men who are not a little proud at being proficients at this game. I heard an anecdote at North Walsham of a man named Mayes, still living in that neighbourhood, who is so great a lover of the pastime, that a wager was laid by some wags, that they would prevent his going to church by tempting him to play; and, in order to accomplish their purpose, they got into a house, building by the road-side, where Mayes was sure to pass. Being a great psalm-singer, he had a large book under his arm; they called him in to settle some disputed point about the game, and he was very soon tempted to play, and continued to do so till church time was over, and got a good scolding from his wife for being too late for dinner.

I have been led to make these remarks from the pleasure I have derived from your publication; and you may excuse me, perhaps, if I add, with a smile, that I have found some amusement in the game of Morris, by playing it with my chess men; it requires more art to play it well than you would imagine at first sight." Hone comments on the latter letter, but his remarks are drawn wholly from Strutt's work. The reader will perceive that neither of the writers of these communications has even the remotest idea of the connection between the English provincial "marl" and the French "mérelle"; one of them, if not both, seems to take it for granted that "marl" has to do with the fact that the morris-figure is cut in the *clay*.

In that fine protest which Shakespeare, in a "Midsummer Night's Dream" (II, 2), makes Titania address to Oberon, beginning

> These are the forgeries of jealousy,

there is a noteworthy mention of the morris game as played in rustic England. This is really the most striking appearance of the game in English

literature, and shows how common a feature of village life the amusement must have been in the great dramatist's day. Titania portrays the wild tricks played by the king of the fairies in order to spoil the sport of others, and, out of mere whim and jealousy, to summon all disastrous forces of nature, and turn them capriciously against mortals and immortals. She speaks of the calamities thus wrought by the watery elements, by contagious fogs, by rains falling on the land, by every pelting river—disasters which have made the ox idle, and the ploughman lose his sweat, and the green corn to rot. Then she goes on, exclaiming that

> The fold stands empty in the drownéd field,
> And crows are fatted with the murrion flock;
> The nine men's morris is fill'd up with mud,
> And the quaint mazes in the wanton green
> For lack of tread are indistinguishable.

In the last two verses we see that the "quaint mazes"—the lines of the morris-board—were cut in the turf of lawns and fields. It is singular that in all the dictionaries, manuals of sports, and similar works in which the passage is cited, these—perhaps the most important in the description—are invariably omitted. But it is, however, not improbable that "the quaint mazes in the wanton green" refer to the obliterated tracks of the dancers on the village green, and not to the complicated lines of the morris board—in which case the punctuation might well be changed. It is notable that Shakespeare treats the game as if it were an every-day matter—as customary in a rustic region as oxen and ploughmen and green corn.

One commentator of this passage (Alchorne) lets us know that "Nine men's morris is a game still played by the shepherds, cow-keepers and so forth, in the midland counties, as follows. The figure (of squares, one within the other) is made on the ground by cutting out the turf; and two persons take each nine stones, which they place by turns in the angles, and afterwards move alternately as in chess and draughts. He who can play three in a straight line may take off any one of his adversary's men where he pleases, until one, having lost all his men, loses the game." This is, as will be plainly seen, the larger morris, but there is nothing to indicate which of the two boards (fig. 4 or fig. 5) is referred to. The same may be said of another interesting note, on the same passage, to be found in the glossary to Mr. John F. Wise's "Shakespeare, his birthplace and its neighbourhood" (London, 1860, p. 155): "The nine men morris board, instead of being on the earth, is now more frequently cut on the corn-bins of the stables, at the Warwickshire farmhouses, and the ploughmen use white and black beans to distinguish their men; the great object being to get three of them in a row, or, as it is called to have a 'click-clack, an open row;' in order to do this you are allowed to take up your adversary's pieces as at draughts, or else to hem them in until they cannot move. There is also a game called 'three men's morris' which is much simpler."

To sum up finally—as to the lands of English speech. The morris game came probably from France into England—a supposition greatly favoured by the numerous corruptions of the word *mérelles* such as *merils*, *merrels*, *morals*, *moris*, *marl*, all settling into the form *morris*, which can be traced back to a very early age. The elementary form of the game—styled "three men morris"—has, so far as we can judge, always been played by means

of a board showing a single square, but with transverse lines joining both the middle of the four sides and the four angles to each other. The still simpler form, without the transverse lines uniting the angles, such as we hear of in Germany, seems to be unknown among the Anglo-Saxon peoples —its place being perhaps filled by the school-boy's "noughts and crosses" (the American "tit-tat-to") of which we shall hereafter hear in greater detail. This very elementary morris has been generally used—for some generations at any rate—only by children. Of the two forms of the larger morris—the first, three concentric squares with lines connecting the central points of the lateral lines (fig. 5), and the second, three concentric squares having, in addition, diagonals uniting their angles (fig. 4)—both seem to have been known in England before the 17th century, although there are several reasons for believing that the former is the older design. The most common appellation for it was "nine men morris" (or "nine men's morris") from the number of counters employed by each of the two players. Both the earlier and the later forms were carried by the colonists to the United States—as doubtless to other British colonies—but, for some reason, the form having the larger number of transverse lines became there the generally accepted one—perhaps because its slightly greater complexity gave more scope to the player and higher interest to the play. The number of counters or men was increased in the Western land to twelve for each combatant, and the ordinary appellation given to the game was "twelve men morris." Whether this name was ever used in England or not is unknown, but it seems certain that only dictionaries of American origin cite it. In rustic England the game appears to have been even more highly esteemed and widely practiced than in continental lands, as is indicated by the custom of cutting the design or "scheme" of the board in the turf—so that observers could better watch the game as it progressed, or possibly in order to give greater importance to the diversion as one of the elements of a festival.

In German the name of the game of *mérelles* is, in its signification, like one of the more usual Italian appellations. It is called *mühlenspiel*, the word being one of the compounds of *mühle*, the English "mill." The Grimm dictionary copies a definition of the middle High German *mühlenspiel* from Stieler, a dramatist and student of words in the 17th century, which is: "ludus tesserarum diversicolorum per decussatos mandras." Under the word *mühle* (section 5) Grimm gives a definition, the first portion of which is drawn from the "Aramanthes" (3d edition, 1733), a so called "frauen-lexicon" compiled by Gottlieb Sigmund Corvinus (*d.* 1746), who himself edited the first (1715) and second (1739) issues. This note is as follows: "Mühle ist ein spiel *auf dem umgekehrten damenbrete*, welches mit kleinen weissen und schwarzen damensteinen, wie sie das bretspiel hat, von zwei personen gespielt wird. Wer die letzten steine auf dem brete behält, hat gewonnen." From the phrase "auf dem ungekehrten damenbrete" it is evident that Corvinus had never seen a morris board except on the reverse of a draught board, and deemed it impossible to find one designed in any other position. This is explained by the fact that in Germany, the boards for table-play sold in Germany, as elsewhere, always had on one side a chess-board and on the other side the morris-board. If they were made to fold, like a box, then the interior was a backgammon board, while the upper and under sides of the board, as folded, were devoted to chess and morris. In Italy

the combination of the chess and morris boards is still very common; nor have they gone out of use in Germany and other countries. Another compiler of words has the same idea as Steiler about the proper position of the morris board. Valentine in his "Dizionario italiano-tedesco" (1834) puts the word *scaricalasino*—one of the Italian names of the morris game—into a German form as: "*das mühlenspiel* (hinten auf dem damenbret)."

The next Grimm citation is from the large dictionary of Adelung—the best of its day—which appeared between 1774 and 1786, it supplies us with an explanation of the technical term *mühle*, used in the *mühlenspiel* to signify "a line of three pieces." We quote it: "Man hat eine mühle, wenn man drei steine in einer gerade linie hat." The expression *die mühle zu machen* is defined: "durch einschiebung des dritten steines eine gerade linie bekommen;" and the expression *seine mühle aufmachen* is explained "durch wegnehmung des einen steines seine gerade linie zerreiszen."

A "mühle" was thus the same as a "click-clack, an open row," described by a Shakesperian annotator in a previous paragraph; or perhaps an "open row," in English, may be identical with an "aufgemachte mühle" in German—as indeed we might infer from the two adjectives; and can it be that "click-clack," said to be used by the peasants and villagers of Warwickshire, corresponds to the German "gemachte mühle?" Or is it the "parallel mill," of which we shall hear on a later page? The use of technical terms by untechnical writers, as we have before remarked, is of a very vague and uncertain character.

The game ought to have accompanied, or speedily followed, chess across the Alps into the northern parts of the Holy Roman Empire, but we find no very early dates given in any treatise of German games or elsewhere, the oldest being, as we shall see, in the early half of the 17th century, although a diligent investigator would, most likely, be able to trace the game to a much remoter period. The farther Teutonic regions received the morris game from Germany. It is known in Dutch as *molenspel*, a rendering of the German name, as is the Danish *mölle* or *möllespil*. All these appellations would seem to indicate that the game came into this portion of the world from Italy, where, as we have seen, it was for a long time called *molino* (mill). Although the elaborate Italian and French dictionary known as "Le nouvel Alberti" (1885), in its French portion under *mérelle*, asserts that the game "s'appelle aussi le jeu du moulin," we have not chanced to find such a statement in any other lexicographical work. But Von der Lasa's assertion in regard to this point, reported elsewhere, must be taken into account.

Only one recent German investigator—so far as we are informed—even alludes to the morris game. This is the just mentioned writer, Tassilo von der Lasa, the reference occurring in connection with his exhaustive researches into the treatment of chess, morris, and tables, in so many manuscripts dating from the two centuries which followed the completion of the first treatise of this class under the auspices of King Alfonso X. Von der Lasa, commenting the codices known under the names of "Bonus Socius" and "Civis Bononiae," says: "Diese drei spiele scheinen eine allgemein bekannte und beliebte trias im 14. Jahrhundert ausgemacht zu haben." It is well to note that this high authority writes the German name of the game *mühlespiel* instead of *mühlenspiel*, and twice employs a Teutonized form of

the French appellation, *die merellen*. In noticing the game, with its problems, or positions, as they appear in the two early manuscript treatises which we have mentioned, he speaks of it as *das grosse mühlespiel*, which can only be in contradistinction to that simpler variety to which we have so often alluded, and which employs in its board, or playing surface, only one square instead of three (that is, one external and two internal).

Perhaps as concise an account of the game as we can quote from any current German work, is that given in Meyer's "Konversations-Lexicon" under the word *mühlenspiel* (of which the variant *mülchenspiel* is cited), where it is described as a "bekanntes spiel, das von zwei personen auf einer aus drei koncentrisch in der mitte jeder der vier seiten durch eine linie durchschnittenen vierecken bestehenden figur, dergleichen sich meist auf der untern fläche des damenbrets befinden, gespielt wird. Jeder der spielenden hat neun damensteine und sucht, in dem er die steine, einen nach dem andern entweder in die ecken oder in die mitte aufsetzt, eine "*mühle*" zu bekommen, *d. h.* drei steine neben einander in einer linie zu erhalten. Dann zieht er seine mühle auf und schlägt, wenn er sie wieder zuzieht, einen stein des gegners, der nicht in einer mühle steht. Man sucht besonders eine zwickmühle zu bekommen *d. h.* eine solche mühle die auf den einander parallelen linien steht, und wenn sie aufgezogen wird, zugleich die andere zuzieht, so dass man bei jedem zug einen feindlichen stein schlägt. Das spiel hat der verloren, welcher alle steine bis auf zwei eingebüsst hat, so dass es ihm nicht mehr möglich ist eine mühle zu bekommen. Hat man bloss noch drei steine, so kann man springen, *d. h.* die steine nach willkür setzen, wohin man will. Unter umständen kann auch der eine spieler den andern festziehen *d. h.* ihm jeden weitern zug versperren." One of the rules which the writer cites is to be noted, namely that "If a player have only three pieces left he is allowed to 'jump,' that is, to move whither he will—according to his own pleasure."

A much more detailed account of the German morris is found in an interesting publication, "Archiv der spiele," of which three annual parts were published in Berlin in 1819-21. The article is contained in the second volume issued in 1820 (pp. 21-27), a notable characteristic of the description being that the "three men morris" board is represented as a square, with transversal lines running from the middle of each lateral centre to the opposite one, but without any diagonal lines (fig. 6), being, therefore, simpler even than the form known to exist elsewhere (fig. 1). This form is the equivalent of the Swedish *tripp, trapp, trull*, and the English *noughts and crosses*. In England this is made by drawing two horizontal and two perpendicular lines on a school-slate or page of paper, the outer (quadrangular) lines of the figure remaining unexpressed, or represented only by the frame of the slate or the margin of the paper (fig. 9). The players use no counters, but write alternately in the spaces an o or a + (or in Sweden a 1), each endeavouring to form a row of three. Another thing to be noted is

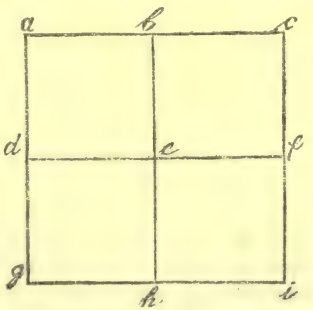


Fig. 6.

that the larger morris board with diagonals is likewise unfamiliar to the compiler. Although the essay is somewhat long we shall quote the whole of it, premising that the first section is devoted to the simpler, the second to the more elaborate game. The general heading is: "Das mühlenspiel (triodium, jeu des mérelles);" the style will be found to be somewhat antiquated, owing, no doubt, to the fact that a part of the matter at least is borrowed from earlier works: "Das kleine oder einfache mühlenspiel (fig. 6), wird von zwei spielern, jeder mit 3 damsteinen versehen, auf einem brett nach der folgenden zeichnung gespielt. Auf den neun ecken, *a* bis *i*, können steine gesetzt werden, und 3 in einer reihe, z. b. *g h i*, *b e h* heiszen eine mühle. Derjenige spieler, dem es zuerst gelingt, mit seinen 3 steinen eine mühle zu setzen, hat das spiel gewonnen, und den etwa verabredeten einsatz. Der gegenspieler sucht ihn daran auf alle mögliche weise zu hindern, indem er seine steine diesem zweck gemäsz anwendet. Besonders darf er ihn nicht eine stellung nehmen lassen, wo er durch versetzung eines steines auf zwei punkten eine mühle zusetzen kann, wie z. b. *b a e* oder *b c e*, wo er an der vollendung der einen nicht mehr würde gehindert werden können. Unsre knaben bedürfen zu diesem spiele weder brett, noch damsteine, sondern eine zeichnung mit kreide oder schieferstift, ein aufrisz auf die erde ist ihnen hinreichend, so wie zum spielen kirsch- und pflaumenkerne, kleine kiesel, rechenpfennige etc. Das spiel kündigt sich zwar durch hohe einfachheit als ein urspiel an, wie es denn in der that von den griechischen und römischen knaben so gut als von den unsrigen gespielt wurde; aber für das reifere alter hat es kein interesse, weil es, mit gehöriger aufmerksamkeit gespielt, immer remi [remis] wird, und vom morgen bis zum abend nicht zu ende kommt. Dieser umstand hat zur erfindung des weit interessanteren groszen mühlenspiels, oder *doppelmühle* geführt." This account of the "three men morris" seems intelligible enough. His statement as to the simple instruments of the game which German children are content to employ would apply to other lands. It will be seen that he asserts with confidence the practice of the game, in this form, by the boys of ancient Greece and Rome.

The writer entitles the second part of his article "Das doppel-mühlenspiel." We reproduce his wood-cut of the older morris-board, although it has been given on a previous page (see fig. 5, here fig. 7). From almost his first phrase it will be understood that he is treating of the *nine-men* morris: "Es wird von zweien auf einem brette gespielt, wie die figur es darstellt. Ein jeder hat 9 gewöhnliche damsteine von verschiedener farbe, welche aber keine ursprüngliche plätze haben, sondern von den spielern abwechselnd und willkührlich aufgestellt werden nachdem der erste aufsatz durch das loos entschieden ist. Der zweck des spielers ist des gegners steine zu schlagen, und wer zuerst so viel steine verliert, dasz er weniger als 3 behält, hat das spiel verloren, weil er alsdann keine mühle mehr machen, also den gegner nicht mehr schlagen kann. Denn nur derjenige kann schlagen, der eine neue mühle macht, oder eine schon vorhandene zuzieht, und geschieht das schlagen dadurch, dasz er dem gegner einen stein wegnimmt, und zwar welchen er will, sobald er nur nicht zu einer geschlossenen mühle gehört. Eine mühle heiszt aber nichts als drei gleichfarbige steine neben einander auf derselben aufstellreihe. Das brett ist nämlich mit 3 quadraten eins in dem andern bezeichnet, welche in ihrer mitte durch linien durchschnitten sind. In den ecken, und da wo sich 2 linien kreuzen, sind die aufstellpunkte; also auf

dem ganzen brette sind deren 24 vorhanden. Wenn nun steine auf *a b c*, auf *d e f*, auf *g h i* stehen, bilden sie mühlen, und eben so auf *b e h*. Also nach horizontaler und verticaler richtung sind mühlen möglich, nicht nach der diagonalen richtung, und z. b: *c f i* ist keine mühle. Schon beim aufstellen ist der hauptzweck: selbst mühlen zu machen, und den gegner daran zu verhindern, und darnach wählt man die aufstellpunkte seiner steine. Gelingt es z. b: einem spieler, 3 steine auf *c h b* oder *e f n* zu bringen, bevor die punkte *d b* und *d e* vom feinde besetzt sind, so kann ihm dieser eine mühle nicht verhindern, weil er nur einen stein auf einmal setzen, also nur einen der beiden schliesz-punkte der mühle besetzen kann.

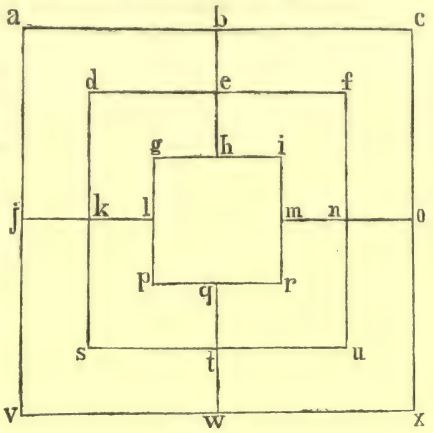


Fig. 7.

Die aufstellung ist vollendet, wenn jeder seine 9 steine aufgesetzt hat, und dann beginnt ein abwechselndes ziehen, d. h. bewegen der aufgestellten steine von einem aufstellpunkte zum andern auf den marquirten linien, z. b: von *d* nach *e* ist ein zug, und von *e* aus sind, wenn keine standpunkte besetzt sind, 4 züge möglich, nämlich nach *b*, nach *h*, nach *f* und nach *d*. Von den übrigen durchschnitts-aufstellpunkten aus, sind nur 3 züge möglich, z. b: von *h* nur nach *e*, oder nach *i*, oder nach *g*; und von den eckaufstellpunkten nur 2 züge, z. b: von *f* aus nur nach *n* oder nach *e*. Daher strebt man immer, sowohl beim aufstellen als beim ziehen, sich dieser mittlern punkte zu bemächtigen. Der zweck des ziehens ist ebenfalls mühlen zu machen, und den gegner am machen oder zuziehen derselben zu hindern. Geschlagen wird nämlich: einmal, wenn eine mühle zuerst gemacht wird; dann aber auch, so oft sie zugezogen wird. Daraus werden sich leicht einige spielregeln ergeben, z. b: dasz man nicht eine mühle aufziehen musz, deren wiederzuziehen der feind hindern kann, z. b: ich wollte den stein *e* von der mühle *d e f* nach *h* ziehen, und der gegner hätte einen seiner steine in *b*, so würde er ihn gleich nach *e* herunter ziehen, und dadurch meine mühle unbrauchbar machen, oder gar durch schlagung eines dazu gehörigen steins zerstören, wenn er inzwischen selbst eine mühle zuzieht. Ferner: dasz man immer denjenigen der schlagbaren, d. h. nicht in einer geschlossenen mühle stehenden steine seines gegners schlagen musz, der ihm die nächste anwartschaft zu einer mühle giebt, z. b. habe ich die wahl zwischen *b e f*, so musz ich *e* schlagen, weil, wenn ich z. b: *b* nähme, der gegner vielleicht die mühle in *d* schlieszen könnte, oder wenn ich *f* nähme, in *h*. Wer seine steine bis auf 3 verloren hat, der fängt an zu springen; d. h. er zieht nicht mehr schrittweise, sondern setzt, wie beim aufstellen, seine steine beliebig wo er will. Sind beide spieler zum springen reducirt, so ist das spiel, ohne grobe fehler von einer seite, remi [remis], d. h. es kann es keiner gewinnen, es müszte denn der fall seyn, dasz der eine spieler beim ersten sprunge sich eine doppelte mühlenanlage vorbereiten kann,

welche der gegner nicht zu hindern vermag. Eine zwickmühle nennt man bei diesem spiele zwei so gelegene mühlen, dasz man mit einem und demselben zuge die eine öffnen und die andre schlieszen und so abwechseln kann, z. b. *b h f n u* wären mit steinen besetzt, so kann ich dadurch, dasz ich den stein *f* nach *e* ziehe, die mühle *b h* schlieszen, indem ich *n u* öffne, welche ich durch einen rückschritt auf dem folgenden zuge wieder schlieszen kann. Ich kann also auf jedem zuge schlagen, so lange diese stellung dauert, welche der feinde jedoch auf zweierlei weise zerstören kann. Einmal dadurch, dasz er den punkt *e* mit einem seiner steine besetzt; dann auch dadurch, dasz er einen stein von der gerade geöffneten mühle schlägt, wenn es ihm gelingt, trotz der zwickmühle des feindes, eine mühle zuzusetzen. Wir haben in diesem spiele zu wenig selbsterfahrung, möchten es aber dem damspiele an interesse gleichsetzen, wo nicht vorziehen; wenn wir gleich glauben, dasz auch hier, bei gleicher stärke, der anziehende gewinnen musz. Man pflegt hier einen doppelten matsch, einen groszen und einen kleinen zu unterscheiden, und damit doppelten und dreifachen verlust zu verbinden. Der kleine matsch heiszt: wenn jemand bis zum springen geschwächt wird, ohne eine mühle gemacht zu haben; der grosze matsch: wenn er auch mit dem springen zu keiner mühle kömmt, sondern das spiel verliert ohne eine mühle gemacht, ohne dem gegner einem einzigen stein geschlagen zu haben. Ueber den erfinder, über ort und zeit der erfindung dieses mühlenspieles, so wenig als des vorgehenden damspieles, haben wir bis jetzt etwas sicheres ermitteln können." This is the most complete explanation known to us of the method of playing the larger morris game, and doubtless most of the features and rules cited are of much antiquity. It merits an English rendering had we space for it, and did we not consider a reproduction of the original of more value to those whose researches lie in this direction. It is proper to say that in the very last portion of his description the author uses the English word "match" in the sense of "variety" or "kind of victory," like our technical terms "gammon," and "backgammon." A player wins a little "match," when his opponent has been able to form no "mill" (or line of three men) before he has reached the "jumping" point (that is, been reduced to only three pieces). He gains a great "match" when the opposing player has at no time been able to complete a "mill," nor capture a solitary man.

We have been unable to look through much of the German literature in search of quotations relating to the game of morris. One poetical passage was, however, easily discovered. This occurs in a piece by Paul Fleming (1609-1640), the most poetical of all the German 17th century poets. He says in one of his lyrics:

> Gleichfalls mangelts nicht an spielen,
> Vor uns steht das interim;
> Da die peilke; hier sind *mühlen*.

Of the other games mentioned in the piece other than *mühlen* we know little; *peilke* (or *beilke*) was, we believe, played with a ball or balls. The citation from this poet—who died while still so young, and who was introduced to the world of English readers by Longfellow—is also the oldest German mention of the morris known to us.

Friedrich Amelung, in his invaluable serial, "Baltische Schachblätter" (part 6, 1898), has an essay "Zur geschichte des schachspiels in Russland," (p. 139-147), in which he tells us that the later historical writers of Russia,

especially Sorokin and Sabelin, are agreed in believing that Russia obtained the game of chess from the Greeks, that is through the Byzantine empire, and not directly from central or southern Asia, as has been maintained by all recent western writers. Mr. Amelung relates that the sixth general council of the church—the same which Van der Linde styles the Synod of Elvira in Spain ("Quellenstudien," p. 58)—in one of its ordinances made games played with dice unlawful. The "Nomokanon," the Slavic code of church law, contains this canon, and imposes a penalty of dismissal from his functions on every bishop, priest, or deacon who does not avoid dice-play and drunkenness. According to Sorokin, modifications of the "Nomokanon" were made in Byzantium during the 11th and 12th centuries, and were sent to Kiev, reaching that place about the year 1270, and formally received validity. Such a modification of the above-mentioned ordinance 42 of the council cited, was composed by the famous historian and canonist, John Zonaras (*d.* 1118 in the convent at Mount Athos), forbidding all the clergy to practice dice or chess—this being by no means a solitary instance of clerical ignorance in regard to the real character of the latter game. This forms the earliest known mention of chess in Russia, and the canonical prohibition of the game under what may be called the eastern decretals, lasted down to the beginning of the 18th century. In one of the Russian canonical injunctions against the Indian game pronounced during the 16th century, it is stated, as an excuse for its inhibition, that it is derived from the "godless Chaldeans." Other games, including especially cards, were subsequently added to the condemnatory list. We learn, however, that at the Russian court, chess, perhaps by clerical dispensation, or perhaps only by courtly license, was nevertheless played in this same period, and played so frequently that an artisan was attached to the court for the turning of chess-men, and hence bore the title of "Shakhmatniki." But during all this time there seems to have been no ecclesiastical opposition to the morris game. The earliest notice of *mérelles* is that cited by Sabelin, who delves from the court accounts in the year 1675, a bill for six sets of ivory chess men, together with boards for morris and backgammon, ordered of the "Shakhmatniki." Mr. Amelung further reports that, although prohibited, not only the nobility, but also the burghers of the cities, and even the peasants, knew, and sometimes played, the prohibited chess, as well as draughts, backgammon, morris, dice and other games. The name of the morris game in Russia is *melniza*, being the ordinary word for "mill." In the language of most of the countries which lie between the Teutonic region and the greatest of the Slavic nations, the word given by the dictionaries as the name of this game indicates the source of its introduction. The signification in general is "mill," and we may therefore reasonably assume that the diversion must have come from Italy, either through Germany, or by some other route. Thus, in Hungarian, the word *malom* signifies "mill," and the word *mérelles* is translated *malomjátek*, the latter element signifying "game;" another compound of *malom*, namely *malmosdi*, also has the signification of "morris game." In Bulgarian, the names for "mill" and *mérelles* are likewise identical.

The Dutch term for the morris, as we have previously stated, is *molenspel*, that is, literally, the "mill-game." But indigenous appellations for the morris game likewise exist. We have cited from Hyde the term *driestiken* for the lesser morris, and *negenstiken* for the larger, the first element in each

signifying respectively three (*drie*) and nine (*negen*), referring evidently to the three men morris and the nine men morris. The latter element is written in the modern Dutch dictionaries variously, "*stik*" and "*stek*," "*strik*" and "*strek*." The whole word is usually cited as a synonym of *molenspel*. The lexicons also give the verb "*negenstekken*," meaning "to play at nine men morris."

Notices of the game in Danish are to be found in most of the publications devoted to the diversions of children, such as "Spillebog for börn" (Copenhagen 1853, pp. 36-37). Here the brief account bears the title of *mölle*, and includes a drawing of the board used in the major morris. The narrative which we quote in the original, gives the ordinary rules, and states that the game is played with 18 pieces, each player having 9—the sets being of different colours. It is evident that the game follows the German model. A line of three men is termed a "mill," and one of the rules—of which the final clauses are not as clearly phrased as they might be—states that if a player's pieces stand in such a manner that by opening one "mill" he can make another, then it is named a "running mill" (*rendemölle*)—the whole paragraph reading as follows: "Mölle spilles med 18 brikker, hvoraf hver af de spillende har 9, hvorfor de, liegsom i dam, maae være af to couleurer. Brædtet er som nedenstaaende tegning [fig. 5]. Den ene af de spillende sætter först en brik paa et af hjörnerne eller paa de steder, hvor tværstregerne skjære quadraterne; dernæst sætter den anden en brik paa, og saaledes vexle de bestandig, til begge have sat alle 9 brikker paa. Den ene skal söge at hindre den anden i at faae tre brikker i een rade, hvilket kaldes en *mölle*, da man, hvergang man gjör en mölle, har lov at fratage modstanderen hvilkensomhelst brik, man vil, dog ikke nogen, som staaer i mölle. Staae den enes brikker saaledes, at man ved at aabne en mölle strax kan gjöre en anden, da kaldes det en *rendemölle*. Man er da sikker paa, ved hvert træk, at kunne fratage modstanderen en brik, naar denne ikke ved selv at trække i mölle kan tage en brik bort fra den aabnede mölle, hvad man imidlertid i de fleste tilfælde kan forhindre, naar man borttager de brikker, hvormed han kan trække i molle." The last sentences, relating to the "rendemölle," run as follows: "One player endeavours to prevent the other from arranging three of his pieces in a row, which is styled a 'mill,' since every time a player completes a 'mill' he has the right of removing from his adversary's game whatever piece he chooses, unless it be one which stands in a completed 'mill.' If a player's pieces are so situated that by opening a 'mill' [that is, by moving one piece out of a completed 'mill'] he can immediately make another [that is, by moving, at his next turn, the same piece back, thus reforming his row of three], it is called a 'rendemölle' [running mill]. The player is then sure of being able to capture one of his opponent's pieces at every move, unless the latter can himself complete a 'mill' and by that means take away a piece from the [temporarily] opened 'mill,' thus destroying the troublesome 'rendemölle;' "rendemölle," it would thus seem is the equivalent of the German "zwickmühle." The game is said to be still common in the Danish country districts.

In a Swedish work, similar to the Danish one just cited, called "Ungdomens bok" ("Book for youth," 2d ed. Stockholm 1883), edited by Albert Norman, we find an account of the morris game in Sweden. It occurs in the first volume, which is devoted to the games played by boys (p. 162). Unlike

the board given in the Danish work, this one reproduces what we have styled the twelve men morris board (having the diagonal lines), but gives no reason for such a difference in adjoining countries. The game has the usual name *qvarnspel*—"*qvarn*" (Icelandic *kvern*, our old English *quern*) being a purely Scandanavian term for "mill."[130] Having given an account of the game of "noughts and crosses," (*tripp, trapp, trull*, fig. 6)—the writer furnishes no representation of its board—says: "For the proper morris game there is a special board marked with lines such as are shown by the accompanying design (fig. 8). Each one of the two players has nine counters (for example, draughtmen); the men are always set upon the places where two lines cross each other, or encounter each other at an angle, and he who succeeds in putting three of his counters in a row has thereby completed a 'mill' (*qvarn*) and gained the right to take away one of his opponent's men already on the board, but which is not at the time standing in a 'mill.'

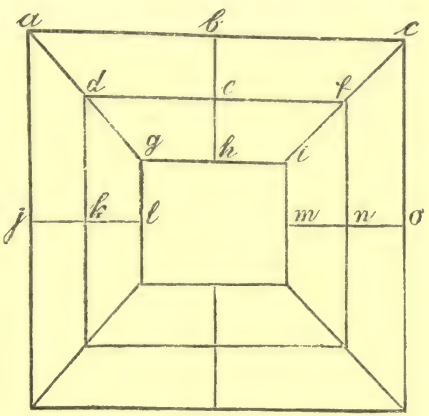


Fig. 8.

The first player usually begins by occupying the angle *a*, and then sets his next man on *e;* if his adversary does not then place his first or second man on *b*, the first player enters his third man there, and has therefore made

[130] The Swedish text is certainly much superior to that of the Danish booklet. This is the paragraph in regard to the simple *tripp, trapp, trull* (naughts and crosses): "Detta är för gossar en mycket vanlig förlustelse. De indela griffeltaflan med två tvär- och två längdstreck i nio qvadrater. De spelande äro två. Den ene väljer *o*, den andre *1* till sitt tecken. Hvar och en söker först få sina tre tecken i en rad och om möjligt hindra den andre derifrån genom inskjutande af ett tecken, der motspelaren tyckes vilja bilda linie. Hvar och en får i sin tur införa blott ett tecken. Har han det redan tre gånger på taflan, utstryker han ett och flyttar det till den plats han önskar. Den, som lyckas först fylla raden, utropar: 'Tripp, trapp, trull, min qvarn är full.'" The classification of the infantile sport receives a warrant from this cry of the successful player. This is succeeded by an account of the proper "mill game" (*qvarnspel*): "Till det egentliga qvarnspelet har man ett särskildt bräde, betecknadt med linier sådana närstående afbildning visar (fig. 8). Hvar och en af de två spelarne har nio tecken, till exempel damspelsbrickor. Tecknen utsättas alltid på sådana ställen, der två linier korsa hvarandra eller sammanstöta i vinkel. Den, som lyckas ställa tre af sina tecken i en rad, har derigenom gjort en qvarn och förvärfvat rättighet att borttaga ett af motståndarens tecken, som redan är med i spelet, men utan att beteckna någon qvarn. Man börjar gerna med att besätta en vinkel, till exempel *a*, och sätter sedan det andra tecknet på *e*; sätter då icke motspelaren sitt första eller andra tecken på *b*, sätter den utspelande der sitt tredje och har härigenom redan förvissat sig om en qvarn. Han kan nämligen bilda den genom att besätta c eller *h*; då motståndaren blott kan hindra ett af de två dragen, blir en qvarn säker. Så snart alla tecknen äro använda, flyttas de, dock så, att blott ett steg tages hvarje gång. Eger en spelare blott tre tecken qvar, får han hoppa, det vill säga ställa sitt tecken på hvilken ledig plats han vill. Den, som blott har två tecken qvar, är förlorad. Ett mål, till hvilket man bör sträfva, är att få två qvarnar jemlöpande med hvarandra till exempel *a, b, c,* och, *d, e, f*. För att ernå detta kan det vara fördelaktigt att låta motspelaren behålla fyra tecken, på det han ej genom hoppande med sitt tredje må hindra planen. Stundom kan äfven motspelaren stängas, så att han ej mere kan göra något drag."

himself sure of a 'mill.' He can form it by occupying *c* or *h*, since his opponent can prevent only one of these two moves, and his 'mill' is sure. As soon as all the men are entered moving begins, but in such a way that only a step is taken at each time. Whenever a player has only three men left he can 'jump,' that is to say he can place his counters upon whatever empty spaces he wishes: the one who has only two counters left has lost the game. An object for which each player ought to strive is to make two mills running parallel with each other, for example *a, b, c* and *d, e, f*. In order to attain this, it will be advantageous to allow the adversary to retain four counters, so that he may not be able to 'jump' with his third one, and thus hinder the plan in view. Sometimes the adversary can be shut up or confined, so that he is no longer able to move."

It will be seen that the game differs from the American game, played on a similar board, in using only nine men instead of twelve. The advice given to the player varies also from the usual counsel in indicating, as the proper first play, the occupation of a point on an external line instead of one of the central lines. The player is also advised to make parallel "mills," but the particular advantage of doing so is not too clearly set forth, nor do we find the peculiar technical term "running-mill," which appeared in the Danish description. It is likely that by "parallel mills," he means really a "rendemölle," in which one of the counters closes or completes one "mill" as it opens the other, the player reversing the operation at his next move, unless prevented by his adversary—or, in other words, "parallel mills" represent the German "zwickmühle."

But we find in Swedish a later and more pretentious treatise on games, the "Illustrerad Spelbok," issued under the pseudonymous authorship of "Tom Wilson." It seems to be based upon an early edition of the French "Encyclopédie des jeux," from which we have already largely quoted, or upon some very similar French compilation. The section in this volume devoted to the morris game (qvarnspel) embraces pages 195-205. The first paragraph describes the three men morris (*liten qvarn* eller *tripp, trapp, trull*), "in which" he tells us "the game of draughts is supposed to have had its origin" ("som antagligen gifvit upphaf til damspelet")—an error which he needlessly borrows from some foreign source. His three-men-morris is, however, really the same as the already described simplest of the morris forms. Its board is represented in figure no. 7. It is really the *tripp, trapp, trull*, or *noughts and crosses*, or rather a variety of it, since apparently there cannot be any diagonal rows of three. His description of this children's sport may be thus rendered: "In the nine corners *a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, i*, counters are entered, three in a row, for instance, *g, h, i*, or *b, e, h*, being styled a 'mill.' He who first succeeds in completing a 'mill,' with his three pieces, has won. The adversary endeavours by all means to prevent this; especially must he not permit the occupation of such points as enable the player to form a 'mill' in two ways, for example, *b, a, e* or *b, e, c*, in which case a 'mill' can be completed by entering a piece, in the first case either at *c* or *h*, and in the second at *a* or *h*." Here the writer abandons noughts and crosses, and gradually glides over into three men morris, for he says: "When the players have entered their three men, then they begin to move them, according to one way of playing, to whatever points they please, but according to another, only to the nearest point along the line on which the pieces stand. This last method is

always employed when the board has, in addition to the right lines, or lines joining the middles of the exterior lines, also diagonals connecting the angles, and this is certainly the most proper board"—this being, as will be noticed, the real three men morris. "When a player has a 'mill' full or complete," he goes on to say, "then he usually cries out to his opponent: 'tripp, trapp, trull, my mill is full' ('min qvarn är full')"—reminding us of the "Tit, tat, to, three in a row!" of English and American children under like circumstances. Here there is again a return to naughts and crosses in the versatile mind of the Swedish writer: "Boys for this game need neither board nor men; they make a rough sketch on card-board with a pencil, or on the ground with a stick, and play with pebbles or the like. They are even accustomed to draw the following four simple lines and make use of pencil signs instead of moveable pieces"—whereupon he presents a sketch of the two horizontal and two perpendicular lines, as drawn on a slate or piece of paper in the way we have mentioned in our note on the English naughts and crosses. He tells us that in the North one of the players uses the figure 1 (instead of **0**), and the other the figure 2 (instead of **+**). This is interesting, since it shows the same popular custom prevailing in Sweden and England. The compiler afterwards says that the simple morris is a primeval sport, and was played by the boys of Greece and Rome just as it is played to-day. He then repeats himself by saying that in some places a board is used which has not only the two central lines (of fig. 6), but two diagonal lines connecting the corners. He finally occupies himself with the older or larger morris board (fig. 7), which he styles "double morris" (*dubbel-qvarn*).[131]

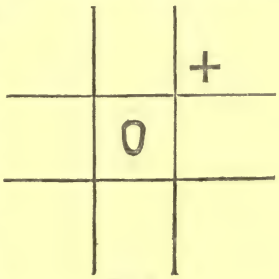


Fig. 9.

After this complete description of the nine men morris we are told that there are also boards provided with diagonal lines connecting the corners (twelve men morris), and he adds that upon such a board players are some-

[131] That the simpler form of the major morris (with no diagonal lines) is, however, used in Sweden as well as the twelve men morris, is attested by another book of games, the "Hand-Bibliothek för Sällskapsnöjen" (Stockholm 1838-9, II., p. 57), already cited in one of our notes. It gives a sketch of the nine men morris board and accompanies it by a brief description: "Till qvarnspelet hörer ett bräde med 3 qvadrater, som på midten äro förenade, jemte 20 brickor af olika färg. Spelarne äro tvenne, som taga i handen hvar sina brickor. Sedan man öfverenskommit om, hvilken som skall sätta första brickan, utsättas brickorna skiftesvis. Dervid iakttages: Att ingen bricka får sättas utan i hörn eller vinkel, och hvilken, som får 3 brickor i en rad, vare sig längs qvadraterna eller längs deras midtel, äger att från brädet borttaga en af motspelarens brickor, som han anser farligast, dock icke af motspelarens tretal, som kallas *sluten qvarn*. Det är således angeläget för båda spelarne, att vid utsättningen på en gång söka förekomma motspelaren, att få tretal och med det samma bereda sig detsamma. Sedan alla brickor äro utsatta, drages en bricka i sänder från hörn eller vinkel till hörn eller vinkel, allt med beräkning af tretal, och den, som först icke äger mer än 2 brickor qvar, har förlorat partiet." We intended to copy here, in the original, the complete account of the mérelle given in the "Tom Wilson" "spelbok," but we refrain because we cannot be sure how much of it refers to the actually existing Swedish game and how much is due to the French work, which is the source of the narrative. The compiler of this book of games is still living in Stockholm, but the librarians and booksellers do not agree as to his real name. On our preceding p. 122 (foot-note), in an extract from the "Deutsche Schachzeitung," the Swedish "Hand-Bibliothek" is erroneously styled "*Hus*-Bibliothek."

times accustomed to begin "jumping" when they have but four men left instead of three. Then follows a brief notice of the *marelle triple* found in the French original (fig. 8), with the important information that some people believe this to be the game described by Palamedes, "which historians have thought to be chess or draughts." Next we have a still more concise notice of the *marelle quadruple* (*alquerque*). The end of the article is the French compiler's *marelle quintuple*, that is to say *fox-and-geese*, the detailed exposition of which we shall hereafter translate. Of the history of the morris game the compilers of these Swedish works tell us nothing; and we have come across no allusion to it in Swedish general literature, although such references probably occur.

And now we come finally to the Icelandic morris. Fortunately we have in a late work—from which we shall quote largely farther on in this volume—a detailed account of the game as it has been played in the northern island for centuries—for more than two at any rate. The work to which we refer is called "Islenzkar skemtanir" (Copenhagen 1888–92), and is a sort of continuation of the treatise on riddles by the late distinguished folklorist and head of the Icelandic national library, Jón Árnason, which is styled "Íslenzkar gátur, þulur og skemtanir," in the fourth part of which is contained the *skemtanir* or "amusements." The author of this sequel or supplement is the well-known student, Ólafur Davíðsson, who confesses that he is himself not very familiar with the table games of which he treats, but we are bound to acknowledge that he has known not only how to get at those people who are, but also to study with some care, if not thoroughly, the immense manuscript treasures relating to similar subjects which are preserved in Icelandic libraries and archives. He frequently cites, for instance, the manuscript vocabulary of great size composed in the early half of the XVIIIth century by Jón Ólafsson of Grunnavík (so styled from the place of his residence),[132] in which much attention was given to games familiar to the Icelandic people, and the technical words connected with them. Of what Ólafur Davíðsson says of *mylna* in Iceland we shall make a rough summary, afterwards appending the original text. We ought properly to preface it by the statement that neither here nor elsewhere do we find any mention of the three men morris as known in the island, nor of any other variety of the morris game than the older (or mediæval) nine men morris, (the three quadrangles connected only by right lines). The compiler of the "Skemtanir" begins by saying that "Mylna is played upon a board of the character here exhibited (fig. 7). There are two players; each of them having nine men, beads or other counters to play with, which must be of different colors, one set, for instance, being light and the other dark. Lots are cast as to who shall first play or set his man, and he who

[132] Ólafur Davíðsson describes the huge dictionary of this author in the introduction (Inngangur, p. 6) to his essay on Icelandic chess—an essay which owes much to the 18th century lexicographer. The manuscript, as he says, is still preserved in that wonderful store-house of learning, the Arna-Magnæan collection at Copenhagen. The words of Ólafur Davíðsson are as follows: "Jón Ólafsson frá Grunnavík [d. 1799] samdi hina íslenzku orðabók sína um miðja 18 öld og skyrir hún því eflaust helst frá íslenzkum leikjum frá fyrri hluta 18 aldar. Annars hlýtur Jon að hafa haft þetta rit undir í mörg ár, því það er ekki kastað höndunum að slíku stórvirki. Orðabókin er 9 bindi í arkarbroti og er ekki til nema á einum stað, safni Árna Magnússonar í Kmh. (nr. 433, I–IX, fol.)." Words relating to games are especially well represented in this inedited lexicon.

thus has to begin puts a man on some point on the board, after which the other enters one of his, and so alternately until both have used up all their pieces. Most players endeavour to form a 'mill' (*mylna*), which is done when one of the contestants arranges his pieces in a straight line on three adjoining points. He who has made a 'mill' may then capture one of the pieces of his opponent and put it off the board, but he is not allowed to capture from a 'mill' already completed or closed (*lokaðri*). If either, for example, has a 'mill' on *s*, *t*, and *u*, or *f*, *n*, and *u*, then he may capture any one of the opponent's pieces he pleases, except those which stand in a completed 'mill,' but every piece of a player is considered to be *en prise* if his opponent can play one of his men upon the point properly belonging to it. In other respects it is not so easy to set the men rightly on a morris board, and good players consider it to be more important that the men stand favourably when they are all placed than to form a 'mill' while the process of placing them is going on. Nor is it easy to lay down rules for the entering of the men, but it may be considered that it is always good to have men at the central points *e*, *n*, *k* and *t*. When all the men are placed, then the player who entered the last but one begins to move, and after that each one moves alternately. The pieces can go to the nearest point in a right line, both combatants trying to play so that they can make 'mills' and use them, for it is of little advantage to have a 'mill' which is not ready to '*spenna upp*' (be opened up) and capture with afterwards [by reclosing it]. If one player, for instance, possesses a 'mill' on *g*, *h* and *i* and the other has men on *e*, *l* and *m*, then the 'mill' is useless for the time being, but if the former can move the piece which stands on *g* to *l* (that is *spenna* the 'mill') and from *l* again to *g* (that is, *loka henni*, 'close it'), then he has revived his 'mill' and may capture whichever of his adversary's pieces he wishes, except those which stand in a closed 'mill.' It is, of course, understood that each one tries to move a piece *i kjaptinn*, that is to say, into the vacant spot or point of a 'mill' which his opponent is opening (*spennir*), in order to hem in (or shut out) the piece which has just moved off its proper spot, and meanwhile is considered to be an exposed man. If one for instance has opened his 'mill' *b*, *e* and *h* (moving his piece from *e* to *f*), and the other has a piece at *d*, then he moves it to *e* and thus makes the 'mill' worthless.

Besides the simpler kinds of 'mills,' there are others, such as *svikamylna*, *krossmylna* and *rennihestur*. *Svikamylna* is that position in which a player can make a 'mill' at every play, or close a 'mill' and open another at the same move. If, for example, he possesses men at *s*, *k* and *d*, and at *b* and *h*, and the point *e* is vacant, then he can move *d* to *e* and *e* to *d*, thus making a 'mill' each time he plays. If the other player has a piece at *f*, then the maker of the 'mill' must capture it if it be possible to do so, for otherwise his opponent can spoil (*binda*) the *svikamylna*. A *krossmylna* (a cruciform 'mill') is when one player has pieces on all points on two crossing lines except the middle one, for example *b*, *d*, *f*, and *h*. As to the *rennihestur*, writers do not agree as to its character. Jón Ólafsson says that he who has a *rennihestur* can capture many pieces at once. Þorsteinn Erlingsson explains that *rennihestur* is a *svikamylna* and *krossmylna* combined, for example the men on *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, *f* and *h*. Others say that *rennihestur* is a position with pieces for example on *a*, *c*, *d*, *f*, *g*, and *i*, and on one of the

points *b*, *e*, or *h*. A *rennihestur* is like a *svikamylna* in this respect, that with it it is easy to capture a piece at every move, but yet it is entirely different in some respects at least. We do not know," says the writer, "the *rennihestur* feature in the north (of Iceland).

When any one has a *svikamylna* or *rennihestur*, it is, so to speak, impossible for the other one to win, but yet the game is not wholly finished before one of the players has lost so many men that he cannot make a 'mill' or, in other words, seven of his nine pieces. Some say that it is a complete 'winning' at *mylna* if a player can hem in the pieces of the other so that they cannot be moved, but others maintain that such a game counts only as a half. It is thought to be something of an honour to place one's men so well at the beginning of a game that the pieces of the other player are hemmed in before he has captured a man. Jón Ólafsson has a drawing of the mylna board just as it is to-day, but gives no detailed explanation of it. He says that *krossmylna* has another name, *vængjamylna*. *Mylna* is in its origin foreign, just like chess and backgammon, but the author thinks it well to give a description of it, for it is largely played in Iceland, and various expressions are used in connection with it which are very common and popular. The Rev. Hallgrimur Pètursson (see p. 37), in his poem on table-games, mentions neither the *morris* nor *fox-and-geese*, and we might infer from this that neither of these names were used at that period, but this would not prove that the games themselves were not then practised." [133] Ólafur Davíðs-

[133] It will be learned from a page immediately following this that the celebrated hymnologist does mention the morris under one of its rarely used and probably older names. — We add here, as usual, the Icelandic text of Ólafur Daviðsson in full: "*Mylna* er telfd eptir þessari mynd [fig. 7]. Tveir tefla. Hvor þeirra hefir nú töflur eða gler o. s. frv. til að tefla með, og verða þau að vera mislit, hvít t. d. öðrum meginn, en dökkleit hinum meginn. Þeir kasta hlutkesti um hvor fyr skuli setja. Sá, sem á að byrja, setur tölu á einhvern reit í taflinu. Þá setur hinn, og svo koll af kolli, þangað til hvortveggi hefir sett allar tölur sínar. Flestir leitast við að koma sèr upp mylnu, en það er mylna þegar annarhvor á tölur á þremur reitum, sem liggja í beinni línu hvor við annan. Sá sem hefir feingið mylnu, má drepa eina tölu fyrir hinum, og er hún þá úr sögunni. Þó má hann ekki drepa úr lokaðri mylnu. Ef annarhvor á t. d. mylnu á *s*, *t* og *u* eða *u*, *n* og *f*, þá má hann drepa hverja tölu, sem hann vill fyrir hinum, nema þær sem standa í mylnu, en dræp er hver tafla annarshvors, ef mótstöðumaður hans getur leikið einhverri af töflum sínum á reit hennar. Annars er talsverður vandi að setja tölurnar í mylnutafli, og þykir góðum taflmönnum meira komið undir því, að tölurnar standi haganlega, þegar búið er að setja þær allar, en að fá mylnu meðan verið er að setja þær. Ekki er hægt að gefa reglur fyrir setningunni, en þó má geta þess, að altaf er gott að eiga tölur á miðreitunum *e*, *k*, *n* og *t*.

Þegar búið er að setja allar tölurnar, leikur sá, sem setti næst seinast, svo hvor eptir annan. Tölurnar ganga á næsta reit við þær, eptir beinum línum. Báðir leitast við að leika þannig, að þeir fái mylnur, og geti notað sèr þær, því það er til lítils gagns að eiga mylnu, sem ekki er hægt að spenna upp og drepa með aptur. Ef annar á t. d. mylnu á *g*, *h* og *i* en hinn tölur á *e*, *l* og *m*, þá verður mylnan að miklu leyti ónýt í bráð, en ef sá fyrri getur fært töluna, sem stendur á *g* til *l*, spent hana, og frá *l* aptur til *g*, lokað henni, þá hefir hann ýngt mylnu sína upp, og má drepa hverja tölu fyrir hinum sem hann vill, nema þær sem standa í lokaðri mylnu. Það segir sig því sjálft, að hvor fyrir sig reynir til að færa tölu í kjaptinn á mylnum þeim, sem mótstöðumaður hans spennir, eða binda þær því þær eru máttlausar á meðan. Ef annar hefir t. d. spenta mylnu, *b*, *e*, *h*, og hinn á tölu á *d*, þá færir hann hana á *e*, og ónýtir þannig mylnuna.

Auk einfaldrar mylnu er til *svikamylna*, *krossmylna* og *rennihestur*. Svikamylna er það, þegar annarhvor getur komið sèr upp mylnu við hvern leik eða lokið mylnu og spent aðra í sama leiknum. Ef annarhvor á t. d. tölur á *s*, *k*, og *d* og *b* og *h*, en reiturinn *e* er auður, þá getur hann fært *d*, á *e* og *e* á *d*, og fengið þannig mylnu í hvert skipti sem hann leikur. Ef hinn á tölu á *f*, þá verður mylnumaðurinn að drepa hana, ef mögulegt er, því annars getur mótstöðumaður hans bundið svikamylnuna. *Krossmylna* er þegar annarhvor á tölur á öllum

son has a foot-note at the end of his essay stating that the morris game is played in England exactly as it is played in Iceland, as may be seen in an account in "Drengernes egen bog" (Copenhagen, 1868, pp. 33-34), which is a translation from the English "Boy's own book." *Mylna*, he says, is also played in Denmark, and is there called *mölle*. As to the term *krossmylna*, it evidently signifies "mills" in process of formation on two lines, one of which runs across the other, or is at right angles to it. This is shown by the synonymous term *vængjamylna*, in which one of the rows or "*mills*" stands like a "wing" (*vængur*) to the other. *Svikamylna* seems to correspond to the Swedish *klappqvarn* or "parallel mill," while *rennihestur*, in its verbal signification, recalls the *rendemölle* of the Danes. As to the allusion to the *leikvísa* "lay of games," of Hallgrímur Pèturssson (1614-74), the famous author of the "Passion Hymns," it may be stated that table-games are not referred to in any early existing copies; but in his other similar piece of rhyme, the *taflvísa*, "lay of tables," of which so high an authority as Gísli Konráðsson, the late distinguished occupant of the Icelandic chair at Copenhagen, deems him to be surely the author, we find backgammon, in several varieties, mentioned, while the morris game is given a place under the obscurer name of *færitafl*.[134] In another collection of stanzas on games, called "Ellideilur," which was discovered in 1890 in the Advocates' library at Edinburgh, allusion is made to table games in general, but only by the introduction of the verb *tefla*, meaning to "play at tables."

reitum á einhverjum krossinum, nema miðreitnum, t. d. *b*,*d*, *f* og *h*. Aptur ber mönnum ekki saman um *rennihest*. Jón Ólafsson segir, að sá, sem eigi rennihest, geti drepið margar tölur í einu. Þorsteinn Erlingsson segir, að rennihestur sè svikamylna og krossmylna sameinaðar t. d. tölur *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, *f*, og *h*. Aðrir segja, að rennihestur sè tölur á t. d. *a*, *c*, *d*, *f*, *g* og *i*, og á einhverjum reitanna *b*, *e* eða *h*. Rennihestur er eins og svikamylna að því leyti, að með honum er hægt að drepa tölu í hverjum leik, en þó er hann talsvert öðruvísi eins og auðsèð er. Eg þekki ekki rennihest að norðan.

Þegar annarhvor hefir svikamylnu eða rennihest, er svo að segja ómögulegt fyrir hinn að vinna, en þó er taflið ekki útkljáð fyrir fult og alt, fyr en annarhvor hefir mist svo margar tölur, að hann getur ekki feingið mylnu, eða sjö tölur með öðrum orðum. Sumir telja það líka fullan vinning í mylnu, ef annar getur fest svo tölur hins, að þeim verði ekki leikið, en aðrir telja slíkt að eins hálfan vinning. Það þykir ekki allítil frægð að setja tölur síuar svo vel í taflbyrjun, að tölur hins festist, áður en kemur til manndrápa.

Jón Ólafsson hefir mynd af mylnutafli, alveg eins og það er enn í dag, enn ekki lýsir hann því að marki. Hann segir að krossmylna heiti *vængjamylna* öðru nafni. Mylnan er útlend að uppruna, eins og *skáktafl* og *kotra*, en mèr þótti þó rèttara að lýsa henni hèr, því bæði er hún tefid mjög mikið á Íslandi, og svo koma fyrir í henni yms nöfn sem eru alveg þjóðleg. Sèra Hallgrímur Pèturssson nefnir hvorki refskák nè mylnu í taflvísu sinni og mætti ef til vill ráða af því, að hvorugt nafnið hafi tíðkazt um þær mundir, en með því er ekki sagt, að töflin hafi ekki verið tíðkuð þá." In his notes Ólafur Davíðsson tells us that one of his authorities, Páll Bjarnason, has heard the verb "að spana" used for "að spenna" or "spenna upp." He likewise informs us that in Iceland, as in other countries, folding boards are found containing backgammon, chess (*skáktafl*) and morris (*mylnutafl*), having within, when the two flaps are shut, the men used for the games.

[134] An account of this game, so far as anything can be learned about it, will be found in the text on the next page. As to Hallgrímur Pèturssson, we find two instances of the use of the word *tafl*—signifying, as must be borne in mind, either chess or some other table game—in the second volume of the recent memorial edition of his poetical works ("Sálmar og kvæði," Reykjavík, 1890, I., p. 426),

Treyst ei: tre brunnu
Tafli hálfunnu;

and again (p. 437):

Opt er auga á *tafli*,

neither of which passages throws any special light on our theme.

Dr. Jón Þorkelsson, archivist of Iceland, regards the author of this to be Jón Jónson, who dwelt at Helgavatn, and the date of its composition to be between 1630 and 1650. These lines read:

Þessi skein með fegurð og frygð,
Fargaði allri mannsins stygð,
Seggjum marga sætleiks dygð
Sagðist kunna að veita;
Dansa og *tefla* dreingjum band,
Drós var ekki á það traud,
Gleðinnar efldu allan auð,
Sem à kann hjartað leita.

The four stanzas which follow enumerate the various athletic, musical and other sports. There are several allied pieces of verse in Icelandic literature, some of which are printed or cited by Ólafur Davíðsson (pp. 361-365). One is ascribed to the patriotic and warlike last catholic bishop of Hólar, Jón Arason, in which tables, cards, chess and backgammon, with music, are mentioned:

Til hefi' eg *tafl* með spilum,
Tölur sem leggi og völur,
Skák með sköfnum hrókum,
Skjótt og kotru hornótta
Hörpu heldur snarpa,
Hreysta með girnis neistum
Fón með fögrum sóni,
Feingið til lykla og streingi.

This is said to have been composed about 1530. Allusions to so popular a game must, as we have said, occur in Icelandic records—old diaries or letters for instance—of which so many are preserved unpublished both in Iceland and Denmark. And there is no doubt that in the remoter regions of the island traditions, phrases and proverbs, relating to *mylna*, are still awaiting the collector. Let us hope that some scholar of the scholarly land will yet bring all these things together, and throw new light upon the story of a social diversion which was once so widely spread and practised, and is still, in its various forms, a source of enjoyment in many lands.

Before taking final leave of the Icelandic morris we ought, however, in this connection, to state that some manuscript works, which treat of social diversions, mention a game called *Freystafl*, which the writer Jón Ólafsson mistakingly cites from the Flóventsaga, his assumed, or wrongly located quotation being as follows: "Heiðingjar sóttu eptir Flóvent, en sá er næstur var í eptirreiðinni týnir snart lífi sínu, og er svo á að líta viðskipti þeirra, sem maður leiki Freystafl og eigi jafna röð, og leiki úr annari í aðra, og taki hverju sinni einn senn; og sem hann snerist í moti, lá hver fallinn, er fyrir honum varð." The same writer says that this *Freystafl* must be the same as the game known as *færingartafl* (or as Hallgrímur Pètursson calls it, *færitafl*). He says that it is played without dice, and that there are three lines in it; (in Latin, "tribus ordinibus constans"). Ólafur Davíðsson observes that both these names may really represent the morris game, the "three lines" describing the parallel lines which form each side of the major morris. In the passage referring to the *Freystafl*, whencever it may be derived, the expression *jöfnröð*, meaning "even lines" or "full lines," is a proper enough title for the double or parallel mills (*svikamylna*), of which we have heard so much, and the phrase "leiki úr annari í aðra, og taki hverju sinni

einn senn" ("plays out of the one into the other and takes a man once every time"), represents the method of play and capture by means of the *svikamylna*. It should be remarked that Guðbrandur Vigfússon explains this "game of Frey" as "probably what is now called *goðatafl*," citing also the Floventsaga, having perhaps discovered a passage in another chapter than that (the Vth) to which it is assigned by Jón Ólafsson. But no great heed need be given to this opinion, as we have already learned how unfamiliar with table games was the Oxford lexicographer.[135]

The game of *goðatafl* is said by some writers to be played with dice and we are told that no special board is needed for its practice; others state that it may be played on a table-board, or back-gammon board; some again declare that the proper number of men is twenty, but Konrad Maurer ("Germania" XIV, 1869, p. 108) says that it is played with 32 men. Jón Ólafsson explains that the men are white and black, and that the white ones are each as valuable as two black ones; with this rule, it is said, not so many men are necessary. The word *færitafl* is not cited in the Oxford Icelandic dictionary. If it be true that besides *mylna* ("mulino," "mühlenspiel") there are these other names for the Icelandic morris—vernacular names as it would appear—the fact places another face, not only upon the date of its introduction into the country, but also upon the source whence it came. The Floventsaga, one of the fabulous sagas, was written certainly as far back as the earlier half of the XVth century. In fact, a vellum manuscript of it, in the handwriting of that period, exists in the Arna-Magnæan collection at Copenhagen. The manuscript was transcribed in Iceland, so that at that time the *Freystafl* may have been known (but see above).

There are doubtless various, if not many, allusions to *mylna* among the old letters and old note-books, and the collections of inedited verse and prose, which the author of the present sketch has failed to delve out from those public and private libraries of Iceland to which we just alluded, but the search for them must be left to other hands. What we have gleaned indicates that *mylna* must have been familiar in Icelandic homes before the XVIIth century had closed, leaving out the question of its identity with *Freystafl*. It also indicates that *mylna* could have had no connection with *hnefatafl*, or any similar game, existing in the old saga times. The name of the morris game (if there be in truth no earlier appellation than *mylna*) in the Icelandic tongue is evidence enough that it must have reached the island by way of Germany, Denmark or Norway, and that its path thus diverged from that followed by the game of chess. In other words, its arrival in Iceland post-dates the appearence of *hnefatafl* in the sagas. Besides the light which these facts, or inferences, throw upon the character of the old saga game, they are likewise of some weight in estimating the real age and source of *mérelles*. Those who argue that either Greece or Rome was the primary home of this line-game will have difficulty in showing why it should not have reached France, then England, and afterwards Iceland at a much earlier date. Those who attempt, on the other hand, to prove that it, or at least some variety of it, came into Spain from the east, must confess that its arrival took place after the coming of

[135] Neither *Freystafl* nor *færingartafl* are found in Fritzner's "Ordbog" (1886-96), which would indicate that the former need not be sought in Floventsaga; nor do we remember to have seen it in the printed text of that ancient work edited by Cederschjöld.

chess, else it ought to have crossed the Pyrenees, the British Channel and the Icelandic seas in company with the greatest of table games. Our investigations have been too superficial and too restricted to enable us to discuss this larger question, which, in its character, is not unlike that which makes the story of tables so obscure.

We have, as a starting point, on the one side, the simple little game described by Ovid, though too vaguely to make it absolutely certain that it has anything to do with our theme, but there we lose all trace of what more than one archæologist has asserted to be the three men morris of a later age. To the game of tables we find apparent allusions not long after the downfall of the Roman empire, but we do not catch a glimpse of anything resembling the morris game during the 1000 years which follow the age of the Roman poet. On the other side the indefinite character of our knowledge in regard to the codex of Alfonso yields only a slight foot-hold for the belief that the morris game, like chess, came from Perso-Arabic regions into the Iberian peninsula. We are only sure that the Escorial Codex contains an account of a game played upon a design or "scheme" composed of four three-men-morris boards, and that this game bore, and perhaps still bears, an Arabic name. Whether the forms of the morris game of the higher class which appeared a little later on the hither side of the Pyrenees are described in the codex or not we cannot at present say. When Spanish scholars make up their minds to tell us what the non-chess portions of the codex really are, we shall very likely be able to advance a step in our researches. Of course it is possible that the Saracens, who imparted so much to the European world, may themselves have borrowed something from the declining Latin civilization. The early invaders of Spain and Sicily may have found the smaller morris in vogue among the peoples they had conquered, and afterwards developed from it the larger morris, or they may have discovered the latter already grown to maturity. They may have conferred upon it a name of their own, just as the Europeans—supposedly at least—did in the case of *nerd* or *nard*, which we are told originally came from the Indo-Persic world. These, however, are only conjectures, and it is not impossible that none of them may ever assume the aspect of certainties. Still we do not despair of the future efforts of the modern spirit of research, and the shrewd judgment of modern scholarship.

We conclude this portion of our subject by a hasty summary. There exists a group of line-games—thus called, as we have explained, because the men or pieces used in them are entered on the intersections of the lines along which they are moved—this group comprising the following varieties: the three men morris, the nine men morris, and the twelve men morris, the basis of all of which are lines united to form one or more quadrangles —all of which have been largely played, at any rate since the XIIth or XIIIth century, among both the Latin and Teutonic nations. To these differing forms must be added certain games of a composite nature, such as the so called *alquerque*, made up of four three men morris boards, and the well known *fox-and-geese*, originated by uniting five of the smaller morris boards. To these again may be subjoined one or two varieties of doubtful origin and prevalence, such as the *mulinello doppio* (or *mérelle double*) shewn in our fig. 3. This last is perhaps an imitation, or growth of modern days, but none of these varied diversions help us in determining

the character of the Icelandic *hnefatafl*. In none of them is there a chief figure or piece which is attacked by one section of the men or counters, and defended by another section. [136]

The only really scientific treatment of the morris game and its practice —wholly modern in its methods— is to be found in Alban von Hahn's "Buch der spiele" (3d ed., Leipsic, 1900, pp. 249-352), a volume which we shall shortly cite again. It includes both the three men morris and the nine men morris, and gives the former in two shapes, one a "board with 9 points" and one a "board with nine squares." In the illustrative figures of both the minor morris and the major morris a notation similar to that employed in chess is made use of. The vertical or perpendicular lines are indicated from left to right by letters of the alphabet, and the transverse or horizontal lines, from below, upward, by numbers. This enables the compiler to give examples of games. The "mill" or *mühle* is indicated by an M! The games are naturally divided into two parts, the first being the entering of the men, the second, their moves and final completion of the game. We give a diagram (fig. 10) of the nine men morris with the notation, and a specimen of a game with notes and variations. It must be remembered that on the formation of a "mill," the one who makes it has a right to take one of his opponent's men from the board. The *partie* which we copy from Hahn is as follows:

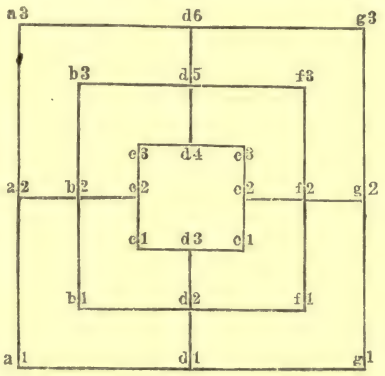


Fig. 10.

a. The men enter:

WHITE.	BLACK.	WHITE.	BLACK.
1. on a3	on b3	6. on c2	on c3
2. » g1	» b2	7. » f1	» d2
3. » b1	» d5	8. » f2 M! takes d2	» d2
4. » f3	» d6		
5. » d4	» a2	9. on g2	» g3

[136] A singular volume — to which we have already referred in our note upon the literature of the games of the ancients — relating largely to the invention and supposed development of the *mérelles*, or the game of *merrills*, as the author styles it, is John Christie's "Enquiry into the ancient Greek game supposed to have been invented by Palamedes" (London 1801). The work is full of misapplied erudition. The writer argues that the game of Palamedes was the Greek *petteia*, from which is derived the morris game, the *ludus latrunculorum*, and ultimately chess. He criticises with some severity the writings of Hyde and Sir William Jones, and indeed all "the erroneous conceptions entertained of this game by the different commentators upon it, for besides the remarks I have quoted from Somaise, we find those of Meursius, Souter, Bulengerus and even the great Casaubon equally contradictory and inconclusive." He finally carries the *petteia* from Greece to the north of China, where it passes into "an intermediate state between the perfect chess and the genuine *petteia*," and where he finds the sacred square or line *ιερὰ γραμμὴ* of the *petteia* represented by the three men

b. The men move:

10. f2-e2	ab-a1	13. f2-e2	d5-b3
11. g1-d1	b2-a2	14. f3-d5	White has won, as
12. e2-fe M ! takes d2	b3-b2		black is hemmed in.

But black, just before the beginning of section *b*, might have placed his last man on e2 instead of g3, leading to the following continuation, in which white obtains, in his 11th and 12th moves, a "double mill" or *zwickmühle:*

White.	Black.		
10. g2-g3	d2-d3	14. b1-b2	a2-a1
11. f2-g2 M ! takes e2	d3-e1	15. g1-d1	a1-a2
		16. d1-a1	hemmed in.
12. g2-f2 M ! takes e1	a2-a1	or	
13. f2-g2 M ! takes e1	b2-a2	16. d1-g1 M ! takes a2	hemmed in.

The author states, that, in his opinion, the morris game has a certain but not very close similarity to the great Japanese *go-bang*, which makes use of a square board of 19 vertical and 19 perpendicular lines, on the intersections of which the game is played, each party having 181 men.[137]

Fox-and-Geese (refskák). — The second game of a minor character to which the *hnefatafl* of the saga period has been referred, is that, which, in the lands where English speech prevails, is known as fox-and-geese. It has a not dissimilar title in most of the continental countries, as, for instance, in Germany, *fuchs- und hühnerspiel*, "fox-and-hens" (or *fuchs im hühnerhof*). As we shall shortly have occasion to see, it stands in an intimate relation to mérelles — being of the same class of line games. One of the most notable authorities on Icelandic antiquities, the present head of the Reykjavík national museum, following an earlier writer, of whom we shall speak on a later page, maintains that the game of fox-and-geese is identical with *hnefatafl*, or, at least, with one form of that ancient diversion.

It is proper to say at the outset that the fox-and-geese board, in comparatively modern times, has begun to be used for games more or less different

morris board, which he conceives to be the proper origin of the inner square of the nine men morris, really representing a sheep-fold among the Scythian herdsmen. Out of this intermediate form in China grew the game of chess, which subsequently spread to India and Europe. The book is well worthy of consultation for the sake of its ingenious errors and of its illustrations, especially its fanciful vignette portraying the origin — among shepherds — of the morris game.

[137] Just as the full proofs of this section have been read there comes a valuable reference from Mr. John G. White, of Cleveland, United States — whose familiarity with every portion of chess literature is now hardly excelled — which fortunately can be inserted here. He asks: "Have you not overlooked Von der Lasa's suggestion that the different names and shapes given to the men in the mediæval mérelles manuscripts were merely devices to assist in recording the moves? From examination of the games recorded, it seems that all these differently shaped and named men had the same moves, the same powers. Apparently the thought of numbering the intersections had not occurred to the authors, and hence, the adoption of these devices as a means of notation merely." This seems to explain the matter satisfactorily.

in their nature, especially for one called in England *solitaire* and in France "English *solitaire*" and for another, known in Spain and Italy as *asalto* (*assalto*), in French as *assaut,* in Danish as *belejringsspel.* In this game, or in one of these games, the upper square of the fox-and-geese cross is transformed into a fortress, usually by drawing bastions or a wall around it, which a portion of the pieces employed are supposed to besiege; but all such diversions are much younger than the board on which they are played, that is to say much more modern than the original fox-and-geese. It is not easy however, to cite many early mentions of the game in any literature, since it has evidently always been, for the most part, limited to the rustic classes, with which, in English lands at any rate, it is still popular.

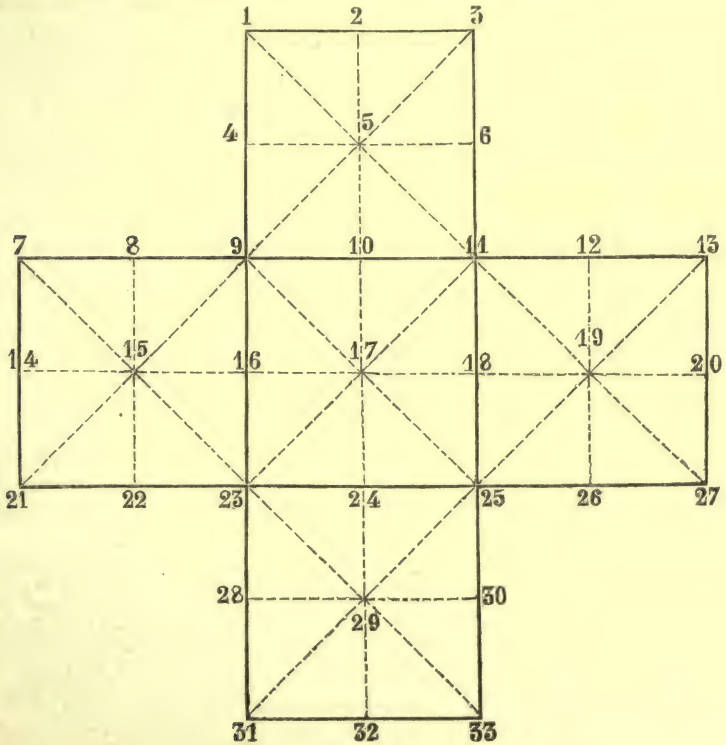


Fig. 11.

Pursuing, as nearly as may be, the same geographical order as in treating mérelles, we find no distinct data as to the age of fox-and-geese in Spain; indeed we are left in some doubt by Brunet y Bellet in regard to the mention of this game in the codex of Alfonso. The modern author gives a drawing of the board, and some matter relating to the game in the very pages in which he is treating that manuscript, but he bestows no Spanish name on the board other than the recent one of "asalto," although, as will be remembered, he quotes the ordinary English title. None of the accessible Spanish lexicographers aid us.

In Italy, particularly in its Northern and central parts, the old style of board is still frequently seen. "Le nouvelle Alberti" (1855) gives first the French title, making it—as do most of the lexicons—*jeu de renard*, and then interprets it in Italian as *giuoco della volpe*. As a matter of fact, if it be some times called *volpe* ("fox"), it is much more commonly named *lupo e pecore* ("wolf and sheep"). In some of the dictionaries of low Latin is cited a game called *vulpes*, but no date is suggested and no citations are given for the use of this title. Most of the Italian books on games describe the method of play. We abridge the rules given by one of these works, but the full text will be found in the note printed below:[138] "It is played with one piece (*volpe*) and with 13 pawns (*polli*, "chickens") which are arranged (fig. 11) on the 13 points (*caselle*) of the board numbered from 1-13; the opposing piece or fox is placed upon whatever vacant point its player may select. The pawns, (that is, geese or chickens) may also be entered on corresponding points in the lower portion of the board. The fox may move forward or backward, to the right or left, or diagonally. The geese are permitted to go only forward and laterally, but cannot move backwards. The player ought not to leave his geese unprotected, or alone, as may be done with the men in the game of draughts [since in this game there is no *exchanging* of men ("pollo" for "pollo")]. Skill at this sport consists in pursuing the fox, and in so shutting him in that he cannot move. The fox captures all the undefended or solitary geese and, in his movements, seeks to impede them from passing into the court-yard (the uppermost square) amid their fellows, so that he can take them more easily. Practice counts for much in this game, as it is only by practice that the player can learn to imprison the fox. The geese move first. To-day, however, the game is generally played with 17 geese, the four which are added to the original 13 being placed at the points 14, 20, 21, 27. The fox is allowed to capture two or more of the geese if, as at draughts, unoccupied points exist behind each of them, and wins the game, either when he has taken captive all the geese, or when he has passed over the points indicated by the numbers 1, 2 and 3;

[138] Omitting a paragraph containing the Lydian story (reported in the French citation, on a page immediately following) the text of the Italian "Come posso divertirmi?" (Milan 1901, pp. 231-233) is as follows: "Il mulinello quintuplo è dato da cinque mulinelli semplici disposti a forma di croce, come nella figura 107. Questa disposizione dà la bellezza di 33 caselle, sulle quali si giuoca una partita assai curiosa addimandata della volpe e de' polli. Un vecchio libro francese mi serve di guida fedele per descrivere questo passatempo. 'Si giuoca con un dama (volpe) e con 13 pedine (polli) che si dispongono su 13 caselle della tavola. I polli si dispongono da una parte (in alto o in basso) e la volpe a piacere in una casella della parte opposta che ne comprende 20 vuote. La volpe può muoversi innanzi o indietro, a destra o a sinistra, o diagonalmente. I polli non possono andare che in avanti e lateralmente, ma non possono, perciò, tornare indietro. Il giuocatore non deve lasciare i polli scoperti o soli, come si pratica per le pedine nel gioco di dama. L'abilità di questo giuoco consiste nell' inseguire la volpe e nel chiuderla di tal maniera, che non possa più muoversi. La volpe mangia tutti i polli che sono scoperti o soli e questi devono impedirle di passare nel cortile, in mezzo a loro, perchè più facilmente potrebbe mangiarne. L' esercizio conta molto in questo giuoco, e perciò è solo con l'esercizio che si può facilmente riescire a far prigioniera la volpe.' I polli muovono per i primi. Oggi, però, si giuoca con 17 polli, e i 4 venuti in soccorso dei 13 vecchi, si collocano nelle caselle 14, 20, 21, 27. La volpe può mangiare due o più polli se, come nella dama, trova caselle vuote dietro a ciascuno di essi, ed ha vinto la partita o quando ha divorato tutti i polli, o quando è arrivata sulle caselle segnate coi numeri 1, 2 e 3, e la perde quando si lascia chiudere in maniera che non possa più andare innanzi, tornare indietro, o fuggire diagonalmente."

and loses it when he has allowed himself to be surrounded in such a manner that he can no longer go forward, return backward or flee diagonally." So far the Italian author. His assertion that the number of the pawns or geese was formerly 13 possesses some historical value, if it be true. The reader will notice the different positions, in the Italian and the English games, of the four additional pieces; instead of the points 14, 20, 21, 27, they occupy, on the Anglo-American board, 14, 15, 19, 20.

This modern Italian author, as the reader will soon be able to notice, is simply a compiler from French sources, not having apparently made any effort to study either the methods of playing the game or the records of its story in his own country. As in the case of other similar diversions both the practice and the history, as well as the name of the game, probably differ in the various Italian provinces. But only laborious inquiry can determine how greatly.

As we have already seen, there have been published during recent years, in France, various books on the games of social life, mostly compiled, unfortunately, by men of little learning, some of whom have allowed their imaginations to play with great freedom whenever they were unable to bring any actual knowledge to bear upon the subject they chanced to be treating. The result is that they have thrown a good deal of darkness upon several of these household diversions. Their evil influence has not only been felt in France, but, through translators and compilers, in various other countries. The "Grande Encyclopédie des Jeux" of Moulidars, to which we have more than once referred in preceding pages, cites a XVIIth century publication of a similar character, finding therein a fabulous story of the origin of the game, and then proceeds to explain its mode of play. He styles it the *mérelle quintuple* since its board is made up of five ordinary three-men-morris boards, combined, as we have seen, in the shape of a cross. It will be noticed that he employs the orthography *marelle*. We insert here the whole original text (p. 101) relating to fox-and-geese: "On obtient cette marelle par la juxtaposition de cinq marelles simples, comme sur notre fig. [11]. Cette transformation de la marelle simple peut aussi être obtenue en se servant d'un solitaire anglais, solitaire français diminué de quatre cases. On a ainsi un jeu de 33 cases, qui sert à une partie singulière nommée 'le Renard et les poules,' inventée par les Lydiens, s'il faut en croire la 'Maison des jeux académiques' (Paris 1668), à laquelle nous empruntons la citation suivante: 'Les Lydiens, peuple d'Asie, entre plusieurs jeux qu'ils inventèrent, donnèrent l'origine et l'usage à celui du renard, non tant pour le désir qu'ils eussent de le jouer, que pour se façonner aux ruses et se garder des surprises que Cyrus, leur ennemi capital, leur dressait tous les jours, lequel les appellait poules, à cause qu'ils aimaient les délices et le repos; et iceux Lydiens le nommaient Renard, à cause qu'il était sans cesse aux aguets, et qu'il cherchait incessamment des finesses pour les surprendre. Ce jeu est ingénieux et récréatif, facile à pratiquer. On le joue avec des dames ou des jetons, à faute d'avoir des poules de bois et d'ivoire en nombre de treize, posées sur treize rosettes ou espaces dont la table est composée. Les poules sont en la partie d'en bas et le renard est en la partie d'en haut, qui consiste en vingt rosettes ou espaces, et vous placez en l'une d'icelles le renard à discrétion, qui peut monter et descendre, aller et venir au haut et bas, à droit et travers. Les poules ne peuvent monter que de bas en haut et ne doivent redescendre. Le joueur ne doit laisser les poules dé-

couvertes, ou seules, non plus qu'au jeu de dames. La finesse de ce jeu est de bien poursuivre le renard, et l'enfermer en telle sorte qu'il ne puisse aller deçà ni delà. Et est à noter que le renard prend toutes les poules qui sont seules et découvertes; enfin, il se faut donner garde de laisser venir le renard dans la partie d'en bas parmi les poules, pour autant qu'il les pourrait plus facilement prendre. L'exercice peut beaucoup en ce jeu, et à force de jouer, on s'y rend bien maître. Les bons joueurs démarent les poules premier que le renard. Celui qui a les poules ne doit permettre, s'il peut, qu'on démare le renard le premier, car cela ne lui est avantageux.

"Telle est la règle de l'ancien jeu, tel qu'on le jouait au XVII[e] siècle; on plaçait les poules sur les cases 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 et 33 du solitaire anglais, et le renard, n'importe sur quelle autre case. Les poules jouaient les premières; elles progressaient en avant, sant pouvoir reculer, ou horizontalement, à droit et à gauche. Le renard allait dans tous les sens, en avant, en arrière, horizontalement et même diagonalement. Dès qu'il trouvait immédiatement devant, derrière lui ou à côté de lui, une poule isolée, de l'autre côté de laquelle se trouvait une case vide, il sautait dans cette case, pardessus la poule, qui était croquée, c'est-à-dire enlevée du jeu. Il pouvait prendre diagonalement, par exemple de la case 5 à la case 19. Tant de prérogatives lui assuraient l'impunité et il pouvait facilement atteindre l'une des trois cases 31, 32 ou 33, où il avait gagné; quelquefois il préférait croquer une à une les pauvres volatiles, qui ne réussissaient presque jamais à remporter la victoire en l'enfermant de manière à le mettre dans l'impossibilité de bouger.

"Cette règle, où tous les avantages étaient en faveur du renard, a été modifiée. On a fortifié les poules, en portant leur nombre à 17, les quatre autres se plaçant en 7, 13, 14 et 20. Il leur devient ainsi beaucoup plus facile de se protéger. Quelquefois même on convient que le renard ne pourra ni prendre ni marcher en diagonale; mais alors on l'affaiblit au point qu'il ne lui reste guère d'espoir de gagner. La meilleure manière de jouer cette partie est de prendre une tablette de solitaire français dont on annule quatre cases, comme nous le disons en parlant du solitaire anglais; on se sert de 17 fiches ou 17 boules ordinaires; pour le renard, on prend une fiche ou une boule d'une autre couleur, par exemple une fiche trempée dans l'encre. Le renard se place sur la case du millieu et les poules jouent les premières. Il est juste que le renard puisse marcher mais non prendre en diagonale. Quand le renard a négligé de croquer une poule en prise on le dit blessé, et l'adversaire ajoute à son jeu une nouvelle fiche, qu'il place en arrière des autres, sur la même ligne horizontale que la dernière de ses poules; dans l'impossibilité d'agir ainsi, il attend pour prendre une nouvelle poule qu'il y ait une place vacante sur la dernière ligne horizontale occupée par ses fiches. On peut convenir que le renard aura le droit de prendre deux ou plusieurs poules à la fois quand deux ou plusieurs fiches ont un intervalle entre elles, comme cela se pratique aux dames; mais il est préférable de s'en tenir à une poule à la fois. Le renard a gagné quand il a croqué toutes les poules ou quand il est parvenu sur la dernière ligne de leur camp (cases 30, 31, 32 et 33), il a perdu s'il se laisse envelopper au point de ne pouvoir plus jouer en avant, en arrière ou en diagonale. Ainsi réglée, la partie n'est pas sans intérêt." In comparing all this with the summarized version which we have given of the Italian compiler's work, we find that the latter has omitted one or two features of what the French

writer tells us is the modern mode of play. Whether he has done this because the Italian method differs from the French or not, it is impossible to say. These features are the placing of the fox at the middle of the board, and the law that he is privileged to move, but cannot capture diagonally.

What is here and elsewhere denominated the "English solitaire" board, consists of points arranged like those of the fox-and-geese board, but not joined together by lines, so that the cross form of the group is not so evident. The French solitaire, a similar game, destroys all resemblance to the fox-and-geese board by adding four more points, two to the second line of the upper section of the cross and two to the next to the lower line of the lower section. The French also have the Spanish *asalto*, called by them *l'assaut*, played on the fox-and-geese board, on the old game of which, though differing considerably, it is apparently based. In the upper section of the cross, or fortress, are placed at will, two men, corresponding to the fox; while the other sections of the board are occupied by 24 men of another colour. The 24 besiegers must always advance either vertically, or obliquely, capturing their adversaries, however, as does the fox in the original game. The game ends either when the besiegers have made themselves masters of the nine points of the fortress, or have captured the besieged, or when the latter have taken all the besiegers.

As to England and America, we know of no other title given to this game, than the usual one. The oldest literary mention of it is in a play entitled "A fine Companion" (1633) by Shackley Marmion, a minor playwright of the court of Charles I, well known as an imitator of Ben Jonson. It was acted, we are told, before King Charles and Queen Henrietta Maria. It contains the passage (II, v) "Let him sit in the shop .... and play at fox-and-geese with the foremen." In the middle of the following century we find a second writer of somewhat greater note—in his day at least—alluding to the game in his only romance. This is the Irishman, Henry Brooke, a friend of Pope, who, in his "Fool of Quality" (1766-68), makes one of his characters ask (I., p. 367): "Can you play at no kind of game, Master Harry?" to which the reply is, "A little at fox-and-geese, madam," the inference being, of course, that he who knows no other game than one so simple and so rustic must indeed be a fool. The literary reader will remember that Charles Kingsley was so great an admirer of this eighteenth century novel that he edited a reprint of it. Fox-and-geese is, in fact, one of those games of which there are but few appearances in general literature; indeed, the game was even regarded as too familiar a sport to be treated in such compilations as the "Compleat Gamester" of earlier days, or the "Hoyle" of later times, and as certainly too rustic to be introduced into the higher fields of literature. In the farmhouses of America is often to be found a fox-and-geese board of wood, made with holes into which pegs are inserted, the peg denoting the fox being always a little higher than the others. In England the fox-and-geese scheme is, sometimes at least, drawn on a round piece of board, with circular depressions at the intersections of the lines to receive the marbles with which the game is played, the fox being usually represented by a blue marble and the geese by gray ones.

Strutt, in his already cited "Sports and pastimes" (1833, pages 318-319), has the following account of the game:—"This is a game somewhat resembling that of mérelles in the manner in which the pieces are moved; but in other respects, as well as in the form of the table, it differs materially; the

intersections and angles are more numerous, and the points, of course, increased, which adds to the number of moves. To play this game there are needed seventeen pieces, called geese, which are placed as we see them upon the engraving (fig. 12), with the fox in the middle, distinguished, either by his size or difference of colour, as here, for instance, he is black. The business of the game is to shut the fox up, so that he cannot move. All the pieces have the power to move from one spot to another, in the direction of the right lines, but cannot pass over two spots at one time. It is to be observed that this board is sometimes made with holes bored through it, where the dots are, and pegs equal to the number of geese put into them, and the fox is distinguished by being larger and taller than the rest. The geese are not permitted to take the fox, if he stands close to them, but the fox may take the geese, in like case, if the spot behind them be unoccupied, or not guarded by another goose; and if all be taken, or the number so reduced that the fox cannot be blocked, the game is won. The great deficiency of this game is, that the fox must inevitably be blocked if the game be played by a skilful hand; for which reason, I am told, of late some players have added another fox; but this I have not seen." The writer, in his last sentence, is possibly referring to the French game of *assaut* which we have just mentioned.

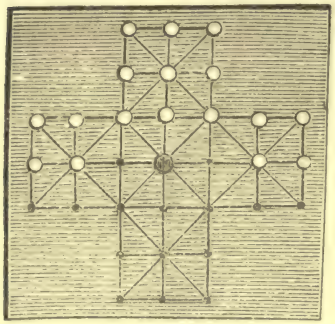


Fig. 12.

The American mode of play, which differs little or not at all from that prevalent in England, is thus concisely described in the "Century" dictionary (*sub voce* "fox"): "Fox-and-geese, a game played on a cross-shaped board or on a chess-board with pins or checkers [draught-men], one of which is the fox, the rest the geese. The geese move forward one square at a time, and win if they can surround the fox or drive him into a corner. The fox can move forward or backward, captures the geese as men are taken in checkers, and wins if he capture all the geese."

In Germany the customary name for fox-and-geese is, as we have noted, *fuchs und hühner* (*or fuchs-und hühnerspiel*); it is said to be styled in South Germany, or in portions of that region, *der fuchs im hühnerhof* ("the fox in the chicken yard"). But, according to a recent book on games (A. Von Hahn, "Buch der spiele," 3d. ed., Leipsic, 1900, pp. 252-3), it is likewise called, as in England, *der fuchs und die gänse* ("fox and geese"). In this late work the author describes, first, the modern *asalto*, for which his name is *das festungs- und belagerungsspiel*, he having no idea, evidently, that it is the development of another game, and begins his account with a description of the board. This he follows with a short paragraph on fox-and-geese, the text of which we quote in full: "Ähnlich ist das spiel: 'der fuchs und die gänse,' welches auf einem gleichen brett, jedoch ohne festungsplätze, gespielt wird. Eine figur, der fuchs, steht auf dem mittelfeld und hat dieselben rechte wie die festungssoldaten. Er darf vorwärts und rückwärts marschieren, jedesmal von einem punkt zum nächsten, und darf eine gans nehmen, wenn das in gerader linie hinter ihr befindliche feld frei ist. Die siebzehn gänse

sind auf der einen hälfte aufgestellt, dürfen nicht schlagen; sie haben gewonnen, wenn es ihnen gelingt, den fuchs so einzuschliessen dass er nicht mehr ziehen kann. Links und rechts neben dem fuchs ist ein leerer platz. Der fuchs gewinnt, wenn er letzteren umgeht und jene wegschlägt." This attempted notice of the original game displays no very accurate knowledge of the matter, and is carelessly written. It is enough, however, to show that the mode of play corresponds with that practiced in other lands. It is still a common diversion in German rural districts. [139]

The game is yet well known and practiced on the Scandinavian mainland, but exact information about it, in those countries, is difficult to procure. The printed notices of it are unsatisfactory and not infrequently erroneous. The Swedish "Hand-bibliothek för sällskapsnojen," heretofore cited, begins (II., p. 645) with the *asalto*, styled *belägringsspel*, or sometimes, as the writer states, *fästningsspel* ("fortress-game"). At the end of the description we are told that he who plays the defenders in one game, generally directs the besiegers in the next. This is followed by fox-and-geese, to which the name *räfspel* ("fox-game") is assigned (pp. 647-8). It is preceded by a diagram of the board unlike any other that we have seen. Instead of having 20 squares with 33 points on the angles, as in the usual cross-shaped board, it has 24 squares with 37 points. The four additional squares are inserted in the angles made by the outer lines of the two sections of the cross, namely those formed (see fig. 11) by the figures 4, 9, 8; 6, 11, 12; 22, 23, 28, and 30, 25, 26. How much this novel board is used in Sweden and how much the older one, it is impossible to say. We are told that this scheme is composed of 26 squares, the writer's own diagram, however, showing, as we have stated, that there are only 24. He gives the number of the sheep (*får*) as 22, an addition of 5 to the game as we practice it in England and America. The "sheep" occupy the 22 points on the central and all other lines above it; the fox is placed on any point below, at the will of its player. The mode of play and capture is as generally described. We are informed that the object of the fox is to make his way to the rear of the flock of sheep, that of the sheep is to shut in the fox. As in the *belägringsspel* the opposing players take the sides of the fox and sheep alternately. It is not impossible that this form of the game may have superseded the older and usual one in

[139] As a matter of interest, we translate the compiler's account of the *asalto*, or as he calls it "the game of fortress and siege" (p. 252): "This game is played on a board, having the form of a cross and thirty three points united by lines. Nine of these points represent the fortress, which is defended by two soldiers. These two men at the beginning of the game may be placed, at will, on any two points appertaining to the fortress. The 24 places outside of the fortress are occupied by the soldiers of the besieging party. The task of these latter is to occupy all the nine points of the fortress, and for this purpose to drive out, or entice from it, the garrison of two men. The besiegers must advance on the lines toward the fortress, bringing a man, at every move, nearer to the sought for goal. Every besieger can be captured by the defendant which stands in front of him, whenever he is not protected by a man in the rear. From this it follows that the men must advance massed together as far as possible. If one of the defenders neglects to capture, then he can be "blown," that is to say, captured. Under certain circumstances the defendants are allowed to capture one or two men in order to draw them farther and farther out of the fortress. The defenders also move one step at a time, but can hop over as many of their opponents as are to be found with a vacant, or undefended point in their rear. When there are no longer enough besiegers to fill the nine points of the fortress then the defendants have won. If, on the other hand, the soldiers are either penned up inside their fortress, or have been expelled in such a way that they cannot return to it, the game has been gained by the besiegers."

some, if not all of the provinces of Sweden, for we do not find, in any work on games, an account of the ordinary board, until we reach the "Illustrerad spelbok" of "Tom Wilson" (see p. 136 and note 131), and so much of that work, as previously hinted, is translated from foreign productions, that we can hardly trust it as a Swedish authority.[140]

Fox-and-geese has certainly long been practiced in Iceland, but just how long it is difficult to say. It is called in that island *refskák* (fox-chess); from the signification of this name we may infer that the game reached the country after the introduction of chess. The theory has been mooted that it has an older title (*knottafl* or *knettafl*), and that under this term it is mentioned in the sagas; but we shall refer to this supposition in detail hereafter. At the present time, special boards for *refskák* are rarely or never found. It is oftenest played on a diagram drawn with chalk on a board, or marked on paper, or on a slate. In the work "Íslenzkar gátur," so often cited, the game is described as follows (pp. 298-300): "As in so many other sports *refskák* is played by two persons; one of them has a 'fox' (*tóa*), and the other 13 'lambs' (*lömb*) [the latter being, of course, the English 'geese']. Ordinarily the 'lambs' are placed at the points indicated (fig. 11) as 1 to 13

[140] The Swedish text, under the heading "Belägringsspelet" (p. 645) is "Till detta spel, som på tyska kallas: *das belagerungs-spiel*, på franska: *le jeu d'assaut*, och här i Sverige äfven kallas: *fästningsspel*, erfordras ett bräde eller en tafla af det utseende motstående figur utvisar och dertill 2:ne särskilt utmärkta pjeser eller soldater, som vid spelets början hafva sina platser å fästningen, samt andra 24 soldater, som placeras å hvar sin af rundlarne utom fästningen, och hvilkas bemödande bör vara att intaga fästningen. Linierna utvisa, huru soldaterna måste framrycka, nemligen de angripande endast på de röda [lines], ett steg hvarje gång, utan att gå tillbaka. De som försvara fästningen få väl ej heller gå mer än ett steg i sender, men kunna gå på både svarta och röda linier fram och tillbaka, och kunna och måste slå likasom i schack [?] och borttaga hvar och en bredvid stående pjes, då nästa rum är ledigt, samt intages. Detta gäller för så många pjeser, som dertill gifva tillfälle, såsom i dam. På detta sätt söka försvararne, att minska de angripandes antal; men böra skynda sig till baka i fästningen. De angripande kunna deremot icke slå, utan måste jemt söka att hålla sig tillhopa och bemöda sig att få försvararne utstängda från fästningen. Slår icke en försvarare, då dertill är tillfälle, äger den spelare, som förer de angripande, att likasom i dam *blåsa bort* den, d. v. s. borttaga försvararne utan rubbning i spelet. Hufvudgrunden för spelet är att få försvararne ur fästningen, för att kunna intaga alla 9 platserna, hvilket är enda vilkoret för vunnet spel. Kan det ej ske, vinner den, som anförer försvararne. Den, som en gång fört försvararne, förer merendels nästa gång angriparne." The description of "räfspelet" reads thus: "Härtill nyttjas en figur, sådan som den motstående, med 26 [24] qvadrater, hvilka i hvarje hörn har ett hål, hvari passa så väl den pjes, som föreställer räfven, som de, hvilka föreställa fåren, hvilkas antal är 22. En spelare förer den förra, och en annan de sednare. Kan den förra komma bakom fåren, är spelet vunnet, likaså å andra sidan, om de sednare kunna innestänga räfven. Fåren uppställa sig i alla hål på alla linier från och med *a*, [central line] till och med *b*, [uppermost line] och räfven får taga sin plats hvar honom bäst synes. Fåren gå ett steg hvarje gång, så väl långsåt qvadraternas sidor, som deras korslinier, men de få icke slå, hvaremot räfven, som har samma gång, får, likasom i dam, slå hvart och ett får, som har tomt rum bakom sig, och flera på en gång, om tillfälle dertill erbjudes. Fåren få endast gå framåt och på sidorna, men räfven får gå och slå fram och tillbaka. Räfven bör bemöda sig att borttaga så många får som möjligt, för att bana sig väg bakom fårskocken. Fåren åter böra söka hålla sig tillhopa, att räfven icke kan få tillfälle att borttaga något, hvarigenom de ovilkorligen skola instänga räfven. Man brukar merändels, att den som ena gången fört räfven, andra gången förer fåren." The expression *de röda* ("the red") and *svarta och röda liniers* ("black and red lines") refer, doubtless to a diagram printed (in other impressions of the work) in two colors. Here the diagram is wholly in black. Probably it has been, in other instances, so printed that the lines in the upper section of the cross (the "fortress") are black and the remaining lines red. Although the board differs from the genuine fox-and-geese in having the four additional squares, the manner of play, it will be seen, is exactly as in the English game.

—the other or opposing man—the 'fox'—at the central point, 17. It is the aim or object of the former to shut the 'fox' in, that is, to arrange the 'lambs' in such a manner that the opponent can no longer move, while the latter seeks to defend himself and capture as many of the 'lambs' as possible. The player of the 'lambs' endeavours to guard his pieces, of course, as the more men he retains the easier is it to enclose the 'fox.' A capture takes place thus: If the 'fox' stand close to any 'lamb,' that is, if the 'lamb' stand on the point next to the 'fox,' and there is no piece on the point behind it in a direct line, the fox is permitted to jump over his opponent to the vacant spot. The 'lamb' is then removed. If the 'fox' stand, for example, on 11 and the 'lamb' on 5 and there is no piece on 1, then the 'fox' jumps over the point 5 to 1 and thus captures the 'lamb.' In other respects the manner of the moves can be readily seen. The 'lambs' follow the lines and the 'fox' chases after them. Both may move to any part of the board on right lines; both, too, go forward and backward (although some assert that the 'lambs' are allowed to march only in a forward direction). The 'fox' is in the greatest danger if it move into either of the four extremities of the cross, as it is more easily surrounded in those regions, but it sometimes, when hotly pursued, finds it necessary to retreat to some one of these perilous points. When the 'fox' can no longer move, it is considered to be shut in, or as it is termed 'burned in,' but to effect this the 'lambs' must stand on the next two points in every direction in order to prevent the jumping and capture process. For instance, if the fox is on 31 then, in order that it be 'burned in', 'lambs' must stand on 23, 28, 29, 25, 32 and 33. It is much more easy to play the 'lambs' than to play the 'fox,' for he who guides the movements of the former, if he has had considerable practice, is sure to win. There are no counters or men special to *refskák*. Beads or coffee-beans are used for the 'lambs,' and something larger, for example, a button or thimble, for the fox." The author closes by saying: "*Refskák* is the most common board-game which I have met with. Jón Ólafsson remarks that every human being knows it. In his time (1750) it was played as it is to-day, or, at least, the board used was the same. Sigurður Guðmundsson says that *refskák* must be the same as *hnottafl* or *hnettafl*, which is supposed to have been practiced in ancient days, and Jón Ólafsson likewise hints at the same thing." [141]

[141] The original Icelandic is as follows: "Tveir menn tefla refskák, eins og flest önnur tófl. Annar hefir tóu, en hinn hefir 13 lömb. Eg set að hornið 1 snúi að lambamanninum, og skipar hann þeim á reitina 1-13. Hinn setur aptur tóuna á miðreitinn, 17. Það er mark og mið lambamannsins að bræla tóuna inni, skipa lömbunum svo, að tóan geti ekkert komizt, en hinn reynir aptur til að varna því, og lætur tóu sína drepa sem flest lömb. Lambamaðurinn ver þau aptur eptir mætti, því eptir því sem hann hefir fleiri lömb, eptir því veitir honum hægra að bræla tóuna inni. Dráplð fer þannig fram: Ef tóan stendur á einhverju lambi, þ. e. ef lamb stendur á reit þeim, sem er næstur tóunni, en ekkert á þeim, sem er annar reitur frá henni, í beina línu, þá má hún stökkva yfir lambið, og yfir á auða reitinn. Hún drepur þá lambið um leið. Það er tekið á burt, og er úr sögunni. Ef tóan stendur t. d. á 11 og lamb á 5, en ekkert á 1, þá má hún stökkva á 1 og drepa lambið. Gángurinn er annars eðlilegur. Lömbin fara leiðar sinnar og tóan eltir þau. Bæði mega fara á alla reiti í tafllnu, eptir beinum línum, bæði aptur á bak og áfram. Hættast er tóunni, ef hún fer út í hornin, og forðast hún það því eins og heitan eld. Aptur neyðist hún stundum til þess, ef lömbin reka hart á eptir. Þegar tóan getur ekki komizt neitt, er hún brælð eða brend inni, en til þess verða lömb að standa á tveimur næstu reitum við hana, í allar áttir, því ef að eins væri lamb á næsta reit, þá gæti tóan drepið það og sloppið svo. Ef tóan stendur t. d. á 31, þá er hún því að eins brælð inni, að lömb standi á 23, 28, 29, 25, 32 og 33. Miklu er auðveldara að vera með

It will thus be seen that the Icelandic *refskák* is what has been called, in a previous page, the older form of fox-and-geese, using only 13 men instead of the 17 common at the present time in other countries. Ólafur Davíðsson adds to his description an account taken from the Danish "Spillebog for börn" (Copenhagen 1853, pp. 33-36) of *asalto*, called, as we have said, in Danish *belejringsspil*. He gives its method of play exactly as we have elsewhere portrayed it.

We should not forget to note that Guðbrandur Vigfússon, under the word *hali* (tail), defines *halatafl* as "a kind of game used synonymously with *hneftafl*," to which he refers the reader. He furthermore says that the game was "probably similar to the English 'fox and goose' [sic]." Then he cites from the Grettis saga (144 A) this sentence, which we quote with his comments: "*hann teſldi hnet-tafl, þat var stórt hala-tafl* (having a fox with a big tail) *hann greip þá upp töfluna ok setti halann a kinnbein Þorbirni* (probably of the brick representing the fox)." The word "brick" signifies here "piece" or "man." The lexicographer then cites the report in regard to the archæological museum at Rekjavík by Sigurður Guðmundsson (1868), and likewise refers, for the expression *hali á hnefa-töflu*, to the Vilmundar saga Viðutan (chapter 8). There is no description of the way in which this *hala-tafl* (or "tail game") was played; but we shall hear more about it in the next section.

In looking over what we have been able to gather in regard to the history of this simple game, and its practice in various lands, we may, perhaps, definitely conclude that it cannot be identical with the old saga game to which we have so frequently referred. Even if it were to be proved to be the same as that diversion which was known as *Freystafl*, we could hardly assign it to the earliest period of the saga age. We shall have to look elsewhere for anything which can throw a gleam of light upon the history or character of *hnetafl* or *hnefatafl*[142].

lömbin en tóuna, og ef sá er góður taflmaður, sem hefir þau, þá á hann vinninginn vísan. Ekki eru neinir sérstakir taflmenn í refskák. Gler eða kaffibaunir eru hafðar fyrir lömb, en eitthvað stærra, t. d. hnappur eða fingurbjörg fyrir tóu. Refskák er algeingasta tafl þar sem eg þekki til. Jón Ólafsson segir líka, að hvert mannsbarn kunni hana. Hún hefir verið eins á hans dögum og hún er nú, eða að minsta kosti er refskákarmynd sú, sem hann hefir dregið upp, alveg eins og sú sem hèr er prentuð. Sigurður málari segir, að refskák muni vera sama sem *hnottafl* eða *hnettafl* það, sem tíðkaðist í gamla daga, og drepur Jón Ólafsson þegar á það." See Ólafur Davíðsson's "Skemtanir" (töfl, pp. 298-9).

[142] The suggestion that the early Icelandic *hnefatafl* and *hnottafl* were two different games, and that one of them is represented by the existing fox-and-geese, first occurs in an article published by the Copenhagen royal society of northern antiquaries in its "Annaler for nordisk oldkyndighed" (Copenhagen 1838-9, pp. 138-158, the article having a large folding plate). Its title is "Om Skakspil i det gamle norden i anledning af et vigtigt fund paa Hebriderne," and it is suggested by Sir Frederick Madden's well-known essay in the English "Archaeologia" of 1832, "Historical remarks on the ancient chess-men discovered in the isle of Lewis," in which Sir Frederick takes the ground that the chess-men in question were fabricated in Iceland — a theory which enables him to cite many of the allusions to chess in the ancient Icelandic writings. His essay was separately reprinted with the same date, and subsequently reproduced in the first volume of the "Chess-player's chronicle" (London, 1841). The name of the author of the Danish article is not given, but it is said to be "ved oldsag-committeen" — the society's committee on antiquities, but in none of the accessible publications of the society of northern antiquaries, issued in the years between 1830 and 1845, do we find the names of the members of this committee. Two men who made part of it were pretty surely the archæologists, J. J. A. Worsaae and C. J. Thomsen. The character of the article may be judged from the fact that its compiler is inclined to see some connection between

What was "Tables." [143] — It is first necessary to consider what the mediæval game of tables really was. English writers, especially the compilers of lexicons, are all agreed that it was the diversion now known in England as *backgammon*, in France, and in certain other lands, as *tricträc* (*tricktrack*), sometimes written *tictac* (*ticktack*), in Germany as *puff*, in Portugal as *tabolas*, in Spain as *tablas reales*, in Italy as *tavola reale*. In Arabic lands, as we have stated (p. 92), or at any rate in Egypt, backgammon is styled *li'b et taula* (the "game of tables" or the "table game"), which title, if we could prove that it had a certain age, would tend to make sure its identification with the old "tables," but we fear that in the near East, both the name and the game, as now played, are comparatively modern importations (within the last two or three centuries) from Italy—like so many other terms and customs in the Levantine lands. Perhaps the appellations *tavola reale*, (royal table) in Italy and *tablas reales* (royal tables) in Spain—as indicating a court game—may deserve some weight as testimony to the identity of the old and the new games. Outside of England the identification by the lexicographers, of backgammon with tables, is not quite general; in fact, we recall very few out-and-out statements to that effect coming from authoritative continental writers, though their silence may be explained by the fact that they take for granted the continuity of tables-backgammon; nor, in regard to this matter, does investigation into the precise significations of the various names bestowed upon the game help us much. The English lexicologists treat us, as usual, to a liberal supply of absurd etymologies, the only possible one of those suggested being *back* + *gammon* — *back* supposed to arise from the going back or

skák as the name of a game and the German *schächer* (see p. 59 in the present volume); that he declares "horse" to have been an old English name for the knight, and that the English appellation for the bishop is "fool"; that *bondi* "is surely the oldest Northern name for the pawn," (p. 157); and that the knight was, in the earliest times, styled in the North *reiðhrókur* —all of which statements lack only truth to make them interesting. The foot-note on fox-and-geese (p. 150) is as follows: "*Hnottafl* signifies properly the game of 'nuts' or a game played with pieces of a nut-like form; a *huni* 'bear,' or the 'young of a bear,' was formerly the chief piece; later 'fox' as the only beast of prey in Iceland, took its place, for the game is now styled *refskák*. The remaining pieces represent sheep, or lambs, who are pursued by the fox. This also occurs in that variety of game with which the Laplanders (Finlapper) amuse themselves, but there the fox pursues the geese, as in the Germans' *gänsespiel*, the Englishmen's *goose-play*, the Dutchmen's *ganzespeel*, and the Frenchmen's *jeu d' oie*." This last phrase constitutes one of the higher flights of the lexicographical muse, for whatever the games therein mentioned may be they are pretty certainly not in any sense fox-and-geese. The author closes his note by informing us that in Denmark it is generally *hunden* (the dog, the hound) — in pronunciation resembling the old *huni* — which in the same game pursues the hares, hence the Danish name. Whether the Danish *hund og harer* corresponds to the Icelandic *refskák* or not there is some doubt; Molbech in his "Dansk ordbog" cites no such phrase, but has (sub *hare*) *haretavl*, explained as "a kind of game with counters," and gives a variant, "harespil." The compiler indulges in the usual historical surmises, such as (p. 154) the opinion that the chess queen may "possibly in old times" have been called Freya after the Scandinavian goddess; that the bishop (p. 155) "in the pagan North, we think, had the name of *hyrningur* (hornbearing)," and so on. The article enumerates several finds of chess-men in the North, and, besides the large folding plate, has many wood-cut illustrations in the text, some from Madden and others from various other sources.

[143] There is a close connection between this section and a previous section ("Tafl," pp. 69-92) of this division of the present volume — so close that even a not very careful reader may discover some repetitions, and perhaps some contradictions as well. But an attempt has been made to separate, in some degree, the mediæval literature and philology of "tables" from its general history and the accounts of its varying methods of play.

return of the men from one table to another, and *gammon* being the Middle-English *gammen*, *gamen*, and early modern English *gamen* = game (the final syllable *-en* having been dropped, in existing English, under the erroneous belief that it was a suffix). This is all doubtless correct as to the latter element of the word, but the best authorities confess that the first element is still an uncertain quantity. *Trictrac*, *tictac*, with their different orthographies, are considered to be variants of an onomatopoetic theme, having its origin in the rattling sound of the dice. This theory, however, though so generally accepted, seems more than doubtful. It may be that the word *tricktrack* (*trictrac*) is merely an alliterative reduplication (having reference to the route taken by the men), signifying a forward and back movement after the manner of "zig-zag;" or it may be the application — a point we shall treat later — of an onomatopoetic word already existing (signifying any sharp, clattering sound). As to *ticktack* (*tictac*), it can be regarded as a variant, possibly with a remote reference to the Italian *toccare* (to touch), which occurs in the name of the variety of tables (backgammon) known as *toccategli* (= "touch it!") — a title, however, which has been apparently more prevalent abroad than in Italy. The German *puff*[144] is generally supposed to be identical with our English "puff" in its etymology, but its *raison d'être* as the title of a game, despite Grimm's explanation ("Wörterbuch," *sub voce*) — if his remark can be considered an explanation — it is difficult to comprehend. But there may very well be quite a different etymology, connected with the Spanish *bufa* (see p. 88), which the editors of Grimm would naturally not know. *Tavola reale* and *tablas reales*, in the two chief romance idioms of the South, imply simply that this game is the best or noblest of the varieties of "tables." There is the usual confusion, not only of names, but of genera. In the English-speaking world (at least in the American part of it), for instance, is practiced a sort of backgammon called "Russian," in which not only is the playing, or movements of the pieces in accordance with the casts of the dice, but the men are "entered" upon the board by the same method of chance, before the play proper begins — the former style of setting the men beforehand in their appointed (place or) places being now esteemed old-fashioned. In the history of a sport like this, we constantly see changes occurring, new fashions in the mode of conducting the game, newer varieties of old forms introduced. The sense and purport of technical terms are frequently altered in different localities and in different ages. Sometimes we find, for example, *tricktrack*, as in Hans Sachs, described as a variety differing from backgammon proper.

[144] *Trictrac* is now the more usual name in most parts of Germany; but *puff* is older. It is to be found in German letters even before the days of Hans Sachs (d. 1576), but the Nuremberg poet enumerates some of the varieties of it played in his day, including among these, *trictrac*, which he styles, like some other authors of his time, *dickedack*. He makes one of his characters say:

> Dergleich ich den bretspiel anhang
> Ich kan das *kurz* und auch das *lang*,
> *Puf*, *gegenpuf*, und auch *regal*
> *Dickedack* und die *lurtsch* zumal.

But, far earlier — in the 13th century in fact — in the writings bearing the name of the "Schulmeister of Eszlingen" we are told that "daz êrste spil ist *buf* genannt." If the date be correct this would be written about the time Alfonso was treating of the same game in Spain. In the citation the word *lurtsch* is, doubtless, the English "lurch."

We have had, too, in England a species of backgammon known as *fayles*, defined in the dictionaries as "an old game, a kind of backgammon," or as "a complicated kind of backgammon, played both with men and pegs," of which an account, written a century ago, has already been given (see p. 88, foot-note), in which we are told that the name of this variation of tables comes from the fact that by some particular throw of the dice, a player "was disabled from bearing off any of his men and therefore *fayled* in winning the game"—which assertion, we fear, is to be looked at as only an etymological surmise.[145] We have already cited (p. 79) what seems to us almost, or quite the latest instances of the use of the word *tables* in English literature, namely in 1716 and 1753, but these were apparently isolated cases; the term really ceased to be in common usage before 1650. The earliest appearance of "backgammon," which we can recall, was in the same century, in a book of great popularity in its day, and still one of the best collections of epistolary literature in English, the "Familiar Letters" of the traveller and student, James Howell (1596-1666), quaintly entitled by the author "Epistolæ Ho-Elianæ," of which the first of many editions was issued in 1646. Howell writes it *baggamon*. So we may say—if further investigations do not contradict us—that as "tables" went out "backgammon" came in, which is at least a slight argument for their identity. The technical term *back-game* was in use at the time of the change, and doubtless before and after. The playwright, Colley Cibber, as the reader has been told (p. 79), speaks of "a *back-game* at tables." It is notable, too, that one section of a work published about that time, the "Compleat Gamester" (1674), is divided into "games within the tables" and those "without the tables." It is soon seen that the former term means games played on the inside of the ordinary table-boards, for they are all varieties of "tables," or "backgammon." The names are: "Irish, *backgammon*, tables, quater, doubblets"—a list of much historical interest both because it contains the two names, "backgammon" and "tables" of the same date, but in other respects—particularly looked at from an Icelandic point of view, as regards *quater*. It will be seen from all this that there are very good reasons for believing that, both in Great Britain and on the continent of Europe, the modern backgammon, as a generic term for all games played on the trictrac-board, is the proper representative of the mediæval *tables*; but it must not be forgotten that this name of it, as the appellation of its principal game or variety, belongs only to the English lands. On the continent its most common appellation is *trictrac* (France), while others are used in other lands, Portugal preserving the old *tables* (*tabolas*), while Spain (*tabolas reales*) and Italy (*tavola reale*) use terms descended from the ancient name. The essential features in the old game were: 1. The double table (not meaning that there were actually two boards hinged or fastened together, such as we do indeed often see nowadays, thus made for the sake of convenience, but signifying that the board itself was divided into

[145] There is a derivation even more ludicrous than this, given to the word *ticktack*, in that once famous book, already known to us, the "Compleat Gamester,"—the first edition of which bears the date of 1674—in which we are informed that the game "is so called from 'touch and take,' for if you touch a man you must play him, though to your loss"—the etymological guesser not seeing that *take* and *play* are words of totally different meaning.

two parts, both bearing the technical name of "tables," the men moving, in the course of the game, out of the one into the other); 2. The number of the men—30 in all, 15 to each player; and 3. The use of dice in deciding how the men were to be placed or moved. These are likewise the chief features of backgammon (*trictrac*, *puff*, *tavola reale*). Only once, in any land, do we find an allusion to fewer men than 30, that being, as we shall see, in the work of a modern Icelandic writer, with whom it is probably the result of an erroneous assumption. The table-board, or backgammon-board, seems to have always had, in European usage, for the last six-hundred years, 12 "points" on each board—24 in all. Thus Tommaseo—as we remember (p. 86)—in his great Italian dictionary tells us (*sub voce* "tavola") about the *tavola reale* and its "ventiquattro *scacchi* [=points]."[146] In this connection it is well to bear in mind that the "points" in backgammon correspond to the "squares" in chess, and that they are expressed in some languages by the same word, as for instance, in the Arabic (*bēt*, "house"). Indeed, if we may give credit to a wood-cut occurring in Van der Linde's

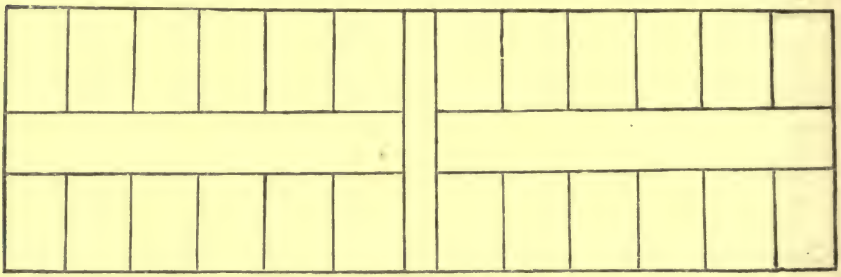


Fig. 13.

account of the Alphonsine manuscript ("Qüellenstudien," p. 72), the points, in the first European board, were represented as "houses," that is, as quadrangular spaces. As to the little known about the treatment of the game of tables in this MS, the date of which is, as the reader will recall, as early as 1280, see the preceding section (pp. 87-89).

Fig. 14.

On the North side of the Apennines, very soon after this time, several representations of the table-board are to be found in manuscripts preserved in the public libraries. This fact, as well as the various dates which we have already given, prove that even before the days of Alfonso a large part of Europe was familiar with the game (see the many citations in the section "Tafl," pp. 69 ff.). The design showing two players at backgam-

[146] Technically the word *tavola* (in the singular) now means in Italy the ending of a chess-game by perpetual check, or the termination of a game of draughts, which is drawn because of the lack of a winning force on either side.

mon (fig. 14)[147] is taken from a richly illustrated MS now in the British Museum, which certainly goes back to the very beginning of the XIVth century, or, as some scholars think, to the century before that. On the board between them will be seen the counters and some of the points, as also the dice, of which last, as will be noticed, three were used, as was not unusual. The absence of dice-boxes may likewise be observed, the dice, as we have suggested (pp. 74-5, note), having, as is evident, been "thrown" by the hand. It is plain that the *partie* is about to begin as none of the men have been placed. The next design (fig. 15) is from a later period, of the .XIVth century, and belongs to a MS in the same library,[148] being a notable and inedited treatise on the game

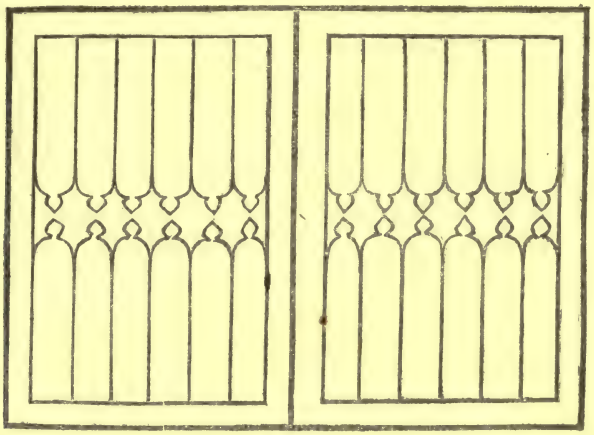


Fig. 15.

of tables, to which we refer in detail elsewhere. It shows a board composed of two tables, or four half-tables. Dr. Wright says: "It was probably this construction which caused the name to be used in the plural; and, as the Anglo-Saxons always used the word in the singular, as is the case also with John of Salisbury in the XIIth century, while the plural is always used

[147] This and the following cut we take from the article "On domestic games and amusements in the Middle Ages," contributed by the archæologist and literary historian, Thomas Wright, to the London "Art Journal" (Nos. 49 and 51, January and March 1859). It afterwards formed chapter X ("Amusements after dinner — Gambling — The games of chess — Its History — Dice — Tables — Draughts") of the author's "History of domestic manners and sentiments in Europe during the Middle Ages" (London 1862, pp. 194-255). The essay still merits separate reprinting, and with a capable editor, might now be easily much enlarged and made of greater interest.

[148] As this important codex, though often described, has, as it would appear, never yet been published, we reproduce the text here in full. The transcript was made, necessarily in some haste, in the summer of 1900 by the Icelandic scholar, Mr. Sigfús Blöndal, now connected with the royal library at Copenhagen. It will be noticed that the MS is in such a condition as to present not a few obscurities: —

Ludus anglicorum. Multi sunt ludi ad tabulas, quorum primus est longus ludus, et est ludus Anglicorum, et est communis, et est talis naturæ. Ille qui sedet ex parte . *am*. habebit . xv. homines in puncto . *q*., et ille qui sedet ex parte . *n q*. habebit . xv. homines in puncto . *a*. Et tunc ludunt cum tribus taxillis vel cum duobus, supposito semper pro tertio taxillo . vi. Tunc ille qui est ex parte . *am*. ducet omnes suos homines, qui sunt in . *q*. per paginas . *qt*. et . *sn*. et . *mg*. usque ad paginam . *fa*. et ibi tollet eos. Ille autem qui est ex parte . *nq*. ducet omnes suos homines qui sunt in . *a*. per paginas . *af*. . *gm* . *ns*. usque ad paginam . *tq*. et ibi

by the writers of a later date, we seem justified in concluding that the board used by the Anglo-Saxons and Anglo-Normans consisted of one table, like that represented in figure 15, and that this was afterwards superseded

tollet eos. Ille autem, qui prior abstulerit homines suos, vincet. Et sciendum quod ille qui sedet ex parte . *am*. potest nodare quodlibet punctum in pagina . *mg*. et in pagina . *fa*. excepto puncto . *a*. quum occupatur per duos homines adversarii sui vel plures, et quum non est ibi nisi unus homo, tunc potest capere eum. Et quicunque potest incipere aliquem hominem adversarii non nodatum in puncto, ubi terminatur numerus omnium vel singulorum taxillorum suorum, potest capere eum, et tunc ille homo captus redibit ad paginam . *tφ*., et intrabit cum . vi. in . *t*., et cum . v. in . *u*., et cum . iv. in . *x*., et cum . iii. in . *y*, et cum . ii . in . *z*., et cum . i . in *φ*., et hoc si illa puncta non fuerint occupata per aliquem de suis propriis nec nodata per adversarium. Et usque intraverit illum hominem captum, non potest ludere. Notandum quod multum expedit in hoc ludo nodare punctum . *g*. et . *f*. per jactum

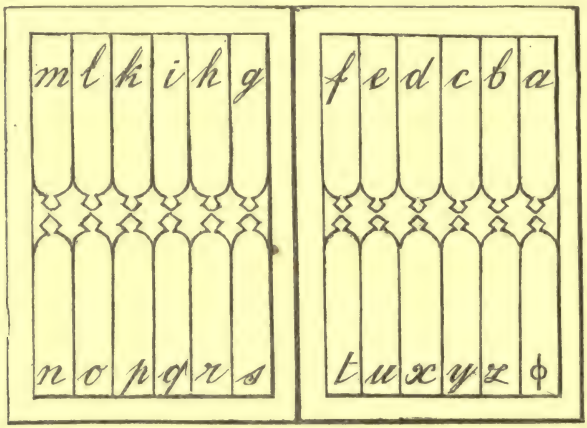


Fig. 16.

taxilli tertii, in quo supponitur semper . vi., quod punctum . *g*. nodare impediet egressum adversarii sui ibidem cum . vi . Et notandum quod in puncta nodata [ubique?] potes ducere quos homines volueris ; item ubicunque inveneris hominem adversarii tui non nodatum, potes capere eum, et facere eum redire ad paginam, ubi primo stetit in initio ludi. Et eodem modo ergo ille qui sedet ex parte . *nφ*. potest nodare quodlibet punctum in pagina . *ns*. et in pagina . *tφ*. excepto puncto . *φ*. quum occupatur per duos homines adversarii sui vel plures, et quum non est ibi nisi unicus homo, tunc capere potest eum. Et quicunque potest incipere aliquem hominem adversarii sui non nodatum in puncto, ubi terminatur numerus taxillorum suorum omnium vel singulorum, potest capere eum. Et tunc ille homo captus redibit ad paginam . *fa*. et intrabit cum . vi. in . *f*. et cum . v. in . *e*. et cum . iv. in . *d*. et cum . iii. in . *c*. et cum . ii . in . *b* et cum . i . in . *a*., et hoc si illa puncta non sunt occupata per aliquem de suis propriis nec nodata per adversarium ; et usque intraverit illum hominem captum non potest ludere. Notandum quod multum expedit nodare puncta . *s*. et . *t*., propter causas quas supra dixi. Et non prius quam ille qui sedet ex parte . *nφ*. duxerit omnes suos homines in pagina . *tφ*., tollet eos sub ista forma : Si aliquos homines habeat in puncto . *t*. illos tollet cum .vi. vel suo equivalenti, videlicet iv. ii. iii, v. i., homines autem qui sunt in puncto . *u*. tollentur cum . *v*., vel suo equivalenti, ut iv. i. iii. ii. vel cum . vi. si nullus homo fuerit in puncto . *t*.; homines qui sunt in puncto . x. tollentur cum . iv. vel suo equivalenti, ut iii. i. et ii. ii., vel cum .vi . et . v. si non fuerint homines in . *t*. nec in . *u*.; et sic deinceps si aliqui homines fuerint in puncto . *y*. tollentur cum . iii. vel suo equivalenti, ut . ii. i., vel cum . vi., . v., . iv., si non sunt homines in . *t*. nec in . *u*. nec in . *x*.; et si aliqui homines fuerint in . *z*. tollentur cum . ii. vel cum . i. . i. vel cum . vi., . v., . iv., . iii., si non fuerint homines in . *t*. nec in . *u*. . nec in . *x*.

by the double board." But we have already suggested that the plural term may have arisen from the fact that the scheme essential to the game was composed of two tabular designs, each with twelve points, and that these

nec in . *y.*; et si aliqui homines fuerint in . *q.* tollentur per i. vel per .vi., .v., iv., iii., ii. si non sunt homines in . *t.* nec in . *u.* nec in . *x.* nec in . *y.* nec in *z.* Eodem modo ille qui sedet ex parte . *am.* tollet homines suos in pagina . *fa.*, et ille qui prior abstulerit homines suos de tabula, ille habebit victoriam.

Est et alia magna et sollemnis et magni magisterii, ut si ille qui sedit ex parte *nq.* posset nodare puncta *n. o. p. q. r.* ita quod punctum *s.* esset apertum, et quod possit compellere adversarium suum ducere viii. homines usque in punctum *a.*, et tunc facere quod habeat unum hominem in . *t.* et alium in . *u.*, et alium in . *x.*, et alium in . *y.*, et alium in . *z.*, et alium in . *q.* et septimum adhuc irreductum; et hæc victoria vocatur *lympoldyng*. Si autem tota pagina . *q.* fuit occupata per adversarium [nec reliquitur?] unum ad intrandum [probably the author means if the "punctum *s*" be not open; compare what follows] ubi agat [?] homines suos, non vocabitur illa victoria *limpolding* sed vocatur *lurching*. Cautela autem in hoc ludo est, ut ille qui sedet ex parte . *nq.* habeat ista puncta nodata . *n. o. p. q. r.*, et quod punctum . *s.* sit apertum, ita quod adversarius suus possit exire cum hominibus suis usque ad paginam . *mg.* Et cum ibidem duxerit unum vel duos de suis, quod statim, quam primum fieri potest, nodetur punctum . *s* . ita quod non possit amplius exire usque omnes homines, quos duxit in pagina . *mg.* ponantur in puncto . *a* . et quod puncta . *t. v. x. y. z.* occupentur per adversarium. Et tunc aperietur punctum . *s.*, ut tum possit exire cum suis hominibus in pagina . *mg.* et sic fiat usque . viii. homines adversarii redducantur in puncto [*a.*]. Et tunc clauso puncto . *s.* fac adversarium implere cum suis hominibus puncta . *t. u. x. y. z.* et tunc remanebunt duo homines adversarii in . *q.* Et tunc aperiatur punctum . *s.*, et tunc semper capias adversarium tuum in puncto . *t.* et ipse te recapiet per . vi., qui est semper iactus suppositus, itaque redibis ad paginam . *fa.* et ibi intrabis, et redibis ad paginam . *ns.* usque ille habeat unum iactum, per quem oportebit ipsum evacuare punctum . *q.* de altero hominum ibidem repertorum, ita quod tantum sit in . *q.* unus homo, et reliquantur puncta . *t. u. x. y. z.* occupata per eum, et tunc capies septimum suum hominem vagantem et tunc erit limpoldatus. Est et alius modus ludendi modo supradictus et [hoc sine ?] taxillis, ut cum uterque ludentium possit eligere iactum quem voluerit. Ille tamen, qui habet prærogativam incipiendi, ipse vincet si bonum ludat; ipse eliget in primo suum iactum . vi. vi. v.; qui tunc proprium iactum eligit, adversarius suus si velit exire cum duobus hominibus ex pagina, in qua situatur in primo ludi; in primo iactu electo podest nodare semper eum, et capere eum, et facere eum redire cum homine capto et sic perdet iactus duorum taxillorum.

Est et tertius modus ludendi ut quum unus eligitur iactus duorum taxillorum, et adversarius suus dat . vi. iactum tertii taxilli, vel si utraque pars iactet suos taxillos et pars adversa dat tertium iactum.

Paume carie. Est et alius ludus ad tabulas qui vocatur *paume carie*, et sit iste ludus cum duobus taxillis et sub hac forma. Nam debent duo ludentes esse ex una parte et duo ex alia, vel tres ex una parte et posterius alii ex alia parte, et sic alterutrum. Fiat autem sors qui-[bus ?] habeant prærogativam incipiendi. Et utraque pars habebit .xv. homines. Ludunt autem sub hac forma. Cum iactu primo ponet unum hominem in . *a.* et cum . ii. ponet hominem in . *h.* et cum . iii. ponet hominem in . *c.* et cum . iv. ponit hominem in . *d.* et cum . v. ponet hominem in . *e.* et cum . vi. ponet hominem in . *f.* Et potest nodari quodlibet punctum; quum tamen unus homo invenitur solus in puncto potest capi per adversarium, et tunc oportet ipsum iterato intrare ut prius. Cum intraverint homines suos in pagina . *fa.* statim tollent homines suos per æquales iactus, per quos eos intraverunt. Ille autem qui prior abstulerit homines suos incipiet adjuvare adversarium suum et tollet homines adversarii sui usque omnes tollantur. Et tunc quot homines habuit ab adversario suo, tunc cum tot hominibus percudet palmas adversariorum suorum, et ideo vocatur *paume carie*. Notandum tamen quod in isto ludo si aliquis iactavit taxillos taliter quod sint æquales, ut . vi. vi., v. v., iv. iv., iii. iii., ii. ii., i. i., tam cum . vi. vi. ponet . iv. homines in . *f.* et cum v. v. ponet iv. homines in . *e.* et sic deinceps, et ultra hoc iterato iactabit. Et per eandem formam quum aufert homines suos, si iactet taxillos ita quod tactus sint æquales, cum illo iactu aufert iv. homines si ibidem totidem reperiantur. Et quotiescunque autem homo capitur redintrabit de novo; ille autem qui prior abstulerit homines suos ipse vincet, sive capiat homines ab adversario suo, sive non. Ille autem qui ultimum homines abstulerit, ipse incipiet iactare in proximo ludo.

Est etiam alius modus ludendi in hoc ludo; quum, ut prædictum est, intrabunt in pagina . *fa.* et prius ducent homines suos per paginas . *mg.* . *ns* . usque ad paginam . *tq.* et ibi

might have been, really were, and probably still are, in some localities, painted on a single piece of board. Dr. Wright adds: "It is hardly necessary to point out to our readers that these two pictures of the boards show us

eos tollent, ut prædictum est. Notandum tamen, quod in hoc ludo potest quodlibet punctum nodari. Sic cum aliquis homo venerit in paginam .*tφ*. non potest amoveri de loco usque tollatur. Et si aliquis homo capiatur ubicunque fuerit oportet primum redire ad paginam .*fa*. et ibi intrare ut prius, et post redduci ad paginam .*ta*. et ibi tolli.

Ludus Lumbardorum. Est et alius ludus qui vocatur ludus Lumbardorum, et est talis naturæ. Ille qui sedet ex parte .*nφ*. habebit familiam suam in .*f*., et qui sedit ex parte .*am*. habebit familiam in .*t*. Tunc ille qui sedit ex parte .*nφ*. ducet omnes suos homines existentes in .*f*. per puncta .*e*. *d*. *c*. *b*. *a*. in pagina .*tφ*. et ibi eos tollet. Cum omnes ibidem fuerint ducet, [?] et erit *φ*. primum punctum in ablatione, et auferat omnes homines ibidem existentes per .vi.; sic qui sunt in .*s*. auferentur per .v. et .vi. [thus only, if no man is in .*φ*.; compare the rules of *ludus Anglicorum*] et sic deinceps. Et si capiatur aliquis homo suus, tunc redibit intrando in paginam .*fa*. et redeat ad paginam .*φt*.; et notandum quod intrare non potest in .*f*. cum fuerit occupatum per proprios homines, nec in aliquo puncto nodato per adversarium. In punctis tamen .*e*. et .*a*. intrare potest, licet sunt occupata per proprios homines, ideo multum expedit illa puncta nodare, ut habeatur introitus si necesse fuerit. Item sæpe expedit nodare puncta .*o*. et *u*, ut impediatur introitus adversarii. Et sic eodem modo faciet adversarius suus in punctis contra se positis. Victoria autem est communis, vidilicet ut qui prior homines suos abstulerit ipse vincet. Et fiet iactus cum duobus taxillis tantum et non pluribus.

Imperial. Est et alius ludus qui vocatur *imperial* et est talis naturæ. Ille qui sedit ex parte .*nφ*. habebit tertiam partem familiæ suæ, sive .v. in .*p*. et aliam tertiam in .*s*. et aliam tertiam in .*t*. Et qui sedet ex parte .*am*. habebit eodem modo familiam suam in .*k*. *g*. *f*. Et si pars .*nφ*. cum familia tota citius venit ad punctum .*φ*. quam adversarius ad punctum .*a*. ipse vincit, si aliter, vincitur. Et fiet iactus cum tribus taxillis.

P[ro]uincial. Est et alius ludus qui vocatur *p[ro]uincial* et tantum variatur ab imperial in situatione hominum, quam in hoc ludo omnes homines ex una parte situantur in punctis .*gf*.

Baralie. Est et alius ludus qui vocatur *baralie*, et est talis naturæ. Ille qui sedit ex parte .*am*. si ultimo fuerit lucratus ludum, vel habeat prærogativam iactus taxillorum ponet omnes suos homines in puncto .*φ*. Et ducentur omnes homines utriusque partis per .*af*. usque ad paginam .*gm*. et in illa pagina tollentur. Et qui prior abstulerit ille vincet. Et si aliquis homo hinc inde capientur fiat introitus in pagina .*ns*. et ducatur per paginam .*tφ* et .*af*. ad paginam .*gm*. Et notandum quod in qualibet pagina potest fieri nodus. Et sit iactus cum duobus taxillis, et subintelligitur numerus .vi. pro tertio taxillo. Si autem pars .*nφ*. vincit, tunc ponet homines suos in puncto .*b*. excepto uno qui erit in .*c*.; et pars alia omnes in puncto .*a*. et ducentur omnes homines usque ad paginam .*ns*. et ibi auferentur, ut prius fiebat in pagina .*mg*., et in illa pagina fiat introitus si aliquis homo capiatur, et ducantur per .*fa*. *φt*. usque ad paginam .*sn*.

Faylys. Est et alius ludus qui vocatur *faylys*, et est talis naturæ. Ille qui sedit ex parte .*nφ*. habebit totam familiam suam in .*t*. exceptis duobus, qui erunt in .*a*.; et qui sedet ex parte .*am*. habebit totam familiam suam in .*f*. exceptis duobus, qui erunt in .*φ*. Et ludunt cum tribus taxillis, si tot habeant, si autem tantum habeant duos, tunc dupl[ic]abitur taxillus minoris numeri. Et tunc ille qui sedit ex parte .*nφ*. ducet duos suos homines in .*a*. usque ad .*t*. Et primum [in] consuetum modum omnes tollet. Et nodet omnia puncta in pagina .*tφ*. si velit. Et si capiatur aliquis homo suus redibit ad paginam .*fa*. et ibi intrabit et redibit; et intrare potest in quolibet puncto, etiam si fuerit occupatum alio vel aliis suis hominibus: in puncto tamen nodato per adversarium non potest intrare. Eodem modo potest ille facere ex parte adversa, et faciet cum eodem modo. Victoria autem talis est. Qui prior abstulerit familiam propriam, vincent; vel si adversarius suus aliqua vice habeat talem iactum qui ludi non potest in toto, tunc subito ille vincitur qui talem iactum habuit, et ideo vocatur *faylis*.

Est et alius ludus qui vocatur [*mylis*, a word now illegible or erased, but thus given by Strutt early in the XIXth century] cujus naturæ talis est. Unus eorum habebit duos homines in .*k*. et .iv. in .*f*. et .iv in .*e*. et .v. in .*φ*, et ille habebit prærogativam taxillorum. Et fiet iactus cum duobus taxillis et præsupponentur .vi. pro tertio taxillo. Alia pars habebit .iii. homines in .*g*. et .iii. in .*d*. et .iii. in c. et .iii. in .*b*. et .iii. in *a*. Et omnes homines utriusque partis ducentur ad paginam .*mg*. et ibi auferentur. Et qui prior abstulerit suos ipse vincet. Et si aliquis homo hinc inde capiatur fiet introitus in pagina .*ns*. et ducentur per paginam .*tφ*. et .*af*. usque ad paginam .*mg*. et ibi auferentur cum tempus fuerit opportunum.

clearly that the mediæval game of tables was identical with our modern backgammon, or rather we should perhaps say, that the game of backgammon, as now played, is one of the games played on the tables."

Sunt et in lusu tabularum quæ cautelæ sunt propriæ, quorum primæ est ex ludo anglicorum, et sit sub taxillis, quum una pars habebit supremum iactum . vi. vi. vi. et habebit prærogativam incipiendi, altera autem pars habebit supremum iactum . ii. i. i.; ille tamen qui habet iactum ii. i. i. ille vincet si bonum ludat; quia cum luserint omnes potest habere duos homines in puncto . *k.* si sederit ex parte . *nφ.* vel duos in puncto . *h.* si sederit ex parte . *am.*; et tunc in proximo lusu cum . *i.* i. potest nodare punctum . *s.* vel . *g.* itaque pars adversa non poterit exire, et tunc faciliter potest vincere si sciat ludere; vel si possit capere unum hominem de adversario suo faciliter potest vincere, quod ille homo captus numquam potest redduci in paginam, ubi debet tolli, usque alius abstulerit omnes suos homines exceptis duobus qui stabant in puncto ubi ille debet intrare suum captum.

Est et alia impertia in lusu tabularum; nam ille qui sedet ex parte . *nφ.* habebit duos homines in puncto . *t.* et alios duos in . *u.* et ille qui sedet ex parte . *am.* habebit unum hominem in . *φ.*, quem debet ducere per paginam . *tφ. sn. mg.* et auferre in pagina . *fa.* et erit semper iactus suus . iv. iv. iv.; ille autem qui sedet ex parte . *nφ.* tollet suos quatuor homines in pagina ubi stant primum in communem modum, et erit semper iactus suus . iii.; ille autem vincet si sciat ludere, quod cum . i. i. i. unum de suis quos habet in . *t.* ponet in . *y.* et in secundo iactu capiet hominem, qui est in . *φ.*, et hoc cum .i. i., et cum tertio .i. ponet in . *x.* alterum duorum qui sunt in . *u.* Et tunc ille qui est ex parte . *am.* intrabit hominem suum cum . iv. iv. iv. et ponet eum in . *n.* et tunc ille qui sedet ex parte . *n.* [*φ*]. hominem suum captum in puncto . *x.* intrabit in puncto *a.* cum . i. et cum . ii. ponet hominem suum in . *x.* qui prius fuit in . *t.* Et tunc pars adversa cum . *iv. iv. iv.* iterum capiet hominem alterius in puncto . *a.* et tunc iterato ille qui sedet ex parte . *nφ.* intrabit hominem suum, et cum . ii. ducet eum in puncto . *b.* et cum tertio . i. nodabit punctum . *x.* itaque pars adversa non poterit intrare. Et tunc cum septies . i. i. i. ducet hominem qui est in . *b.* usque ad punctum . *z.* Et tunc in octavo lusu tollet duos homines qui sunt in . *z.* et in . *φ.* et postea cum tribus vicibus tollet illos homines qui sunt in . *y.* et adhuc remanebit homo partis adversæ in . *a.*; itaque vincetur. Et sciat quod alio modo quam ut prædictum est non potest fieri victoria.

Est et alia impertia similis priori, ut si ponantur . iii. homines in . *t.* ex una parte, et ex parte alia erit unus homo in . *x.* qui habebit iactum ut prius . iv. iv. iv. et alius habebit iactum . i. i. i. Ille autem qui habet homines suos in . *t.* habebit prærogativam incipiendi. Et cum . i. i. capiet hominem adversarii sui in . *x.* et cum tertio . i. ponet hominem in . *u.* Et tunc adversarius suus in . *n.* Et tunc ille qui sedet ex parte . *nφ.* intrabit hominem suum in . *a.* cum uno . i. et cum . i. i. ponet hominem suum in . *x.* qui prius fuit in . *t.* Et tunc ille qui sedit ex parte . *ma.* iterum capiet alium in . *a.*; et tunc ille intrabit in . *a.* capiens adversarium suum, ponens illum hominem cum . i. i. in puncto . *b.* et tunc cum tertio . i. nodabit punctum . *x.*, itaque pars adversa non poterit intrare. Et tunc lucrabitur ludum ut supra in proxima impertia.

Est et alia impertia, ut si tu qui sedes ex parte . *nφ.* habeas unum hominem in . *n.* et . *u.* in puncto . *t.* et septimum in puncto . *φ.* et in pagina . *tφ.* tolles homines tuos, et habebis prærogativam incipiendi; ille autem, qui sedet ex parte . *ma.* habebit tres homines in puncto . *f.* et in pagina . *fa.* eos tollet, et ambæ partes habebunt æquales iactus; magisterium autem est tales imaginari iactus; magisterium autem est tales imaginari iactus per quos poteris ludum lucrari. Et fiet sub hac forma: primus iactus erit . iv. iv. iv. et secundus iactus . vi. vi . i. et tertius . vi. vi. vi.

Est et alia impertia, similis priori, ut si tu qui sedes ex parte . *nφ.* habeas unum hominem in *n.* et . v. in puncto . *t.* et ille qui sedet ex parte . *am.* habebit . iii. homines in puncto . *f.* qui debet tollere homines tuos in pagina . *tφ.* habebisque prærogativam incipiendi. Et ambo vos habebis æquales iactus, magisterium autem est tales imaginari iactus per quos potes ludum lucrari, sub isto tamen pacto, quod nullum hominem tolles in primo iactu. Fiet autem sub hac forma. Primus iactus erit . iv. iv. iii., secundus iactus erit . vi. vi. i. et tertius iactus erit . vi. vi. vi.

Est et alia impertia, ut si tu sedeas ex parte . *no.* habens tres homines in . *b. c. d.* quos debes ducere per paginas . *mg.* et . *ns.* et tollere eos in pagina . *tφ.*; ille autem qui sedit ex parte . *ma.* habebit unum hominem in . *n.* quem debet ducere ad paginam . *fa.* et ibi tollere, et erit iactus suus semper . iii. i., sed iactus tuus semper erit . vi. vi. et tu habebis prærogativam incipiendi; vel alia de hoc non est cura; si autem velis lucrari ludum oportet te capere eum et ita ludere, ut ipse te non capiat.

About this second British Museum codex (Reg. 13 A xviii), Dr. Wright has a few words to say, chiefly concerning the opening section. He remarks: "In the manuscript last quoted the figure of the board is given to illustrate a very curious treatise on the game of tables, written in Latin, in the XIVth, or perhaps even, in the XIIIth, century. The writer begins by informing us, that 'there are many games at tables with dice, of which the first is the long game, which is the game of the English; it is common, and is played as follows' (*multi sunt ludi ad tabulas cum taxillis, quorum primus est longus ludus, et est ludus Anglicorum, et est communis, et est talis naturæ*), meaning, I presume, that it was the game usually played in England. From the directions given for playing it, this game seems to have had a close resemblance to backgammon. The writer of the treatise says that it was played with three dice, or with two dice, in which latter case they counted six at each throw for the third dice. In some of the other games described here, two dice only were used. We learn from this treatise the English terms for two modes of winning at the 'long game' of tables —the one being called 'lympoldyng,' the other 'lurchyng;' and a person losing by the former was said to be 'lympolded.' The writer of this tract gives directions for playing at several other games of tables, and names some of them—such as 'paume carie,' the Lombard's game (*ludus Lombardorum*), the 'imperial,' the 'provincial,' 'baralie,' ['mylis'], and 'fayls.' Perhaps this "long game" is the same as that variety, which was and sometimes still is styled in German "der lange Puff." *Paume carrée* is a title drawn from a variety of tennis. In the text of this codex throughout, it is to be observed that the small Roman numerals i to vi (and xv) represent generally the throws of the dice, but sometimes the numbers of the men; while the small italicised letters *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, *e*, *f*, *g*, *h*, *i*, *k*, *l*, *m*, *n*, *o*, *p*, *q*, *r*, *s*, *t*, *u*, *x*, *y*, *z*, and φ refer to the points on the board as given in fig. 16. In the first game mentioned, known at that time as the "English game" (*ludus Anglicorum*), the player sitting on the *am* side of the board places his fifteen men at φ; his opponent, seated on the *n*φ side, enters all his at *a*. The men at φ are moved through the tables φ*t*, *sn* and *mg* into *fa*, where they are thrown off. His opponent moves his pieces from *a* through the tables *af*, *gm*, *ns*, into *t*φ, whence they are thrown off. He whose men are first thrown off wins the game. Either two or three dice may be used, but, with only two, a third is supposed, its imagined throw being at each cast, 6. The men are doubled on the points, and blots are hit very much as in the modern game, but there are many minor details. In the description of this game "limpolding," or "lympoldyng," and "lurching" seem to be somewhat like the simpler *jans* in the modern French game, being applied to certain positions of the men. In the *paume carée* four players take part, either two against two, or three against one. Two dice are employed, and apparently only six men. In the "Lombard game" the *n*φ player places his fifteen men on *f* while the *am* player sets his on *t*. In the so-called "Imperial" game the *n*φ player has, at the outset, five men on *p*, five on *s* and the remainder on *t*; his opponent divides his men between *k*, *g*, and *f*. If the *n*φ player brings all his men to the φ-point before those of his adversary reach the *a*-point the former wins. In the "Provincial" variety the method of play is the same as in the "Imperial," except that the men of one side are all placed on the points *g* and *f* (and, supposedly, those of the

other side on *s* and *t*). "Baralie" is a game in which the *am* player sets his men on φ and leads them through *af* to *gm* where they are thrown out. The subsequent details differ from those of any previously-named variety. In "faylys" (which we have heard of before under the name of *fayles*), the $n\varphi$ player places his men on *t* except two, which are on *a*; while his opponent has all his pieces on *f*, except two pieces, which are on φ. As in most of the other varieties, captured men must return to their original table, and again begin their rounds. Three dice are used, but if only two are at hand, then, at each throw, the smaller number is regarded as doubled. Apparently the variety styled "mylis" most resembles the modern English backgammon, since the men are divided on each side among four or five points, one player having two on *k*, four on *f*, four on *e* and five on φ; while the other has three men on *g*, three on *d*, three on *c*, three on *b* and three on *a*. Following these named varieties half a dozen other games are described by the author of the codex in closing, but without names. A comparison of this with similar codices in continental libraries is greatly to be desired.

In Spain, if not elsewhere, we hear of table-boards made of precious materials and with great artistic skill, chiefly to be found, at a very early date, among the treasures of royal and princely palaces (see pp. 89-90). We have not been able to discover any such preciously adorned relics North of the Apennines, of a date earlier than the 15th century, but not a few, made in the two following centuries, are preserved in the great museums of Europe, notably at Nuremburg, Munich, Paris and London — one specimen, of some little interest, from South Germany, existing in the archæological museum of Iceland. They are not, however, as common as the costly early boards used for the game of chess, and when found are generally united with a chess-board. Their scarcity may be explained in various ways, the most plausible being the probable simplicity and cheapness of the boards used in early times. The game of tables, though often mentioned with chess, seems not to have been looked upon, either as so serious, so refined, or so courtly a diversion, and neither the material nor the workmanship of its implements would be so ornamental or so solid as in the higher class of chess-boards. Nor do the "points" of the backgammon-board yield themselves to the art of decoration as do the squares of the chess-board — so striking in their outlines and in their conjunction as to have been adopted as a decorative feature in all times — even in lands like Egypt where chess was unknown — in all branches of art, and in every material. The very earliest board for "tables" consisted doubtless of a simple design painted or drawn on a flat piece of wood, or perhaps canvas, with no costly adornments, no pannelling, no inlaid work, no colours — just as we find so many schemes, employed for the various line-games of the ancient world, scratched on the stone steps of public buildings, or on pavements of courts and terraces in Rome and elsewhere. Moreover it must be remembered that we have no artistic chess-boards until after the custom of distinguishing the squares by the different colours came in, and it is almost certain that the backgammon "points" were until a later period only outlined.

In regard to the mode of playing the game of tables we have no precise information earlier than the XIVth century, since we have no access to the text of the Escurial MS prepared by order of King Alfonso in the XIIIth. There were

at that time, as in later periods, many games differing, in more or less important ways, from each other. This was doubtless the case even in much earlier ages. Alfonso enumerates some fourteen or fifteen such varieties, while another MS, of English origin, gives eight; just as a recent French publication treats of eleven. Some of these games, like the various games of cards, doubtless had their periods of popularity and oblivion. Perhaps, as now with the different sorts of backgammon, some were more common in one land, while others were more played in other countries. This is one of the marked differences between tables (nard, backgammon) and chess. There is only one kind of chess, and all efforts made, in older and later times, to introduce varieties, have been failures. They have scarcely been proposed, perhaps propounded and explained in a whole printed volume, when they are forgotten. Another thing to be noted, in this regard, is the fact that the important element of tables is the board. Dice are used in other games than those practiced on the table-board, and may be even used for purposes of diversion, by themselves; while the counters, or men, belong to draughts, merelles, and other sports as much as they belong to backgammon. The board therefore is the only unique implement. Chess, on the other hand, possesses a board used in no other noteworthy game except in draughts, which is merely a derived and simplified form of chess, and the only enduring one which can claim such ancestry. The men employed on the chess-board are even more *sui generis*. There is nothing like them in any other sport possessing either age or importance. They have doubtless been imitated in cards, but cards go back only to a date comparatively modern. It is largely to this fact, namely, the exceptional character of the men, to which chess chiefly owes its individuality, and the slight modifications it has undergone through its long history. It is to the opposite characteristic that tables is indebted for its many varieties, so that, unlike chess, it even now bears different names in different countries.

Now we must go back to an older epoch and to lands outside of Europe. Although there is no doubt that chess originated in India, and grew to a high degree of perfection there long before it reached Arabia, yet the early Indian chess literature, which has come down to us, is insignificant indeed, when we compare it with the numerous treatises still existing in early Arabic. It was in fact in Arabia that the practical and analytic side of the game, no less than its history, really began to be seriously investigated. It is, therefore, perhaps not surprising that the oldest known allusion to chess in Sanskrit literature should be only a century earlier than the oldest known mention of it in Arabic letters. The name of the first Sanskrit writer is Ratnākara, an inhabitant of Cashmere, author of an important poem called "Haravijaya" in which the names of the chess-pieces are cited. His date is perfectly well known, as he was a subject and *protégé* of a king of Cashmere, who reigned from A. D. 835 to 847.[149] But it is noteworthy that the first known allusion to chess, as well as the first attempt to recount the origin of both chess and *nard*, belongs neither to Sanskrit nor Arabic literature, but to a peculiar period of what is customarily styled Middle-Persian literature, of which the written medium is known as Pahlavī. In 1878 the noted Semitist,

[149] See the admirable essay of the distinguished Sanskrit scholar Hermann Jacobi, "Uber zwei ältere erwähnungen des schachspiels in der Sanskrit-litteratur" in the "Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen gesellschaft" (1896, pp. 227-233).

Professor Theodor Nöldeke of Strassburg, published a German translation of the "Kārnāmak," a fanciful account of the education and adventures of a Persian Prince, greatly resembling, in manner and matter, those prose and metrical tales, which abounded in the European literatures, during the XIIth and on to the XIVth centuries, from Italy to Iceland. In this "Story of Ardachshīr," we are told that among the accomplishments which that prince acquired was *catrang* (as the word is now transliterated), a vocable representing the Sanskrit *caturanga* (pronounced tchaturanga), that is to say chess. This work was produced between the years 590 and 628 — let us say about the beginning of the VIth century — and is the earliest yet ascertained authentic mention of the old Indian game in history or literature. In 1885 there were edited at Bombay by a native Parsī scholar, four other Pahlavī writings accompanied by a translation into Gujarati and a less well executed English version. At least one of these stories — and perhaps others — was printed in the original text, with a German rendering, at St. Petersburg by Dr. K. G. Salemann, director of the Asiatic museum in that city, in a volume entitled "Mittel-persische studien" (1887). This was an account of the invention of nard and chess, being possibly the first allusion to the former game in any now extant work. The same tract was again fully described in 1892 by Professor Nöldeke, in his "Persische studien II," contained in the proceedings of the Vienna imperial academy of sciences (philosophical and historical section). He speaks of it as "Das Pehlewī-buch vom schachspiel," and places its date in the first century of Islam, that is between 622 and 722.

The following is the tale in outline: "A king of India sends the learned and sagacious Tachtaritus to king Chosrau Anōsharvān with the game of chess, which had been invented by this sage — half the pieces thus transmitted being of emerald and the other half of ruby. If the Iranians, writes the Indian king, could divine the mode and manner of this game, thus showing that their wise men were not excelled by their contemporaries of India, then the Indians were to pay tribute to the Persians. If not, then tribute was to be paid by the Persians. At the end of the third day the Persian vizier, Vazurjmihr explained the new game of chess, and at once won twelve games against Tachtaritus. He followed this up by producing, himself, a second new game, to which he had given the name of the *nēw Ardachshīr* [that is, the "excellent"— or as some say "new"— Artaxerxes"], because Artaxerxes had been the wisest monarch who had existed during the last thousand years. This game was *nard*. The vizier declared that it represented human life and action, in their dependence on the course of the planets and zodiacal signs. The board signified the earth; the 30 men the 30 civic days of the month, that is to say, the 15 white ones, the days, and the 15 black ones, the nights; the moving to and fro of the pieces portrayed the courses of the constellations; the ace of the dice corresponded to the unity of the creator, the deuce to the duality of heaven and earth, the trey to the trinity of thought, word and deed, the quatre to the four primal elements of nature (dryness, dampness, warmth, cold), as well as to the four points of the compass, the cinq to the five lights, namely the sun, moon, stars, fire and twilight; the size, to the gāhānbār(s), or the six days in which God created the world. King Chosrau now sends the new game under strong escort to the Indian monarch. As no one is able to elucidate it, the escort returns with a double tribute. The nar-

ration ends by asserting, however, that in chess, reason and intelligence alone decide the contest.[150]

Next in time comes the Arabic writer, Jaq'ūbī, who, about 880, relates the same story, ascribing, however, the invention of both games to an Indian sage at the instance of an Indian king. He adds to the allegory of the Pahlavī author that the twelve houses ("points") represent the twelve months and the twelve zodiacal signs; "das steht in Pehlewī-buche nicht," says Nöldeke. Then follows one of the most famous of the early figures in Arabic literature, Mas'ūdī, who, in his historical cyclopædia entitled, after the fantastic manner of the Easterns, "Meadows of Gold," declares, 947 years after Christ, that *nard* was the invention of king Ardachshēr Bābakān (Artaxerxes, the son of Pāpak), who was, by the way, the very hero of the "Kārnāmak," in which occurs the oldest mention of chess. The allegorical description of the game by Mas'ūdī was the same, in all its features, as that given by Jaq'ūbī.

Finally the Persian poet, Firdausī, author of the greatest Asiatic epic, the Shāhname" (the composition of which was finished in 1011), reproduces the principal incidents relating to *nard*, as they stand in the "Kārnāmak," changing slightly the name of the vizier to Būzurgmihr, omitting some of the allegorical details and altering others. Dr. Nöldeke asserts that the Pahlavī narrative, without doubt, was the source from which Firdausī drew, unless the two authors availed themselves of a still earlier common source now lost. What the Persian poet says of *nard* — as is well known — is only a preliminary, or an adjunct to his highly poetical narrative of the introduction of Indian chess into Persia. It seems to be generally regarded that from the name given to the new game by the old Persian sage, pronounced *newardasher*, came ultimately the word *nard*, and its other Eastern name *nerdshīr*. We perhaps ought to state, before leaving this topic, that what is called the Pahlavī language is really the Persian of a certain period (which coincides with the dominance of the Sassanian dynasty, that is from the IIId to the VIIth century), mixed with some foreign, chiefly Semitic elements, and having a peculiar sort of half-cryptographic alphabet, which renders the reading of the texts a most difficult task; indeed, as it seems, it may be taken as a rule that in this singular mode of graphic expression, all words are pronounced exactly as they are not written.

In the matter of *nard* — if the reader will excuse a brief excursus — the student will do well to consult, with the greatest care, the work of Hyde, the early date of which (1694) makes it of high importance, even in regard to the European forms of this diversion. We are able to give here only a hasty and inadequate summary of his treatment of the subject, merely by way of reference to the student. The title given to the second volume of his "De ludis Orientalibus"— which is dedicated to John Hampden, the younger — is "Historia Nerdiludii," as the larger part of it is devoted to the history of *nard* and other ancient games played with dice. He cites — we retain, for the most part, his transliterations — most of the technical terms in various Oriental languages, as well as in Latin and Greek, many of which we have already given from other sources. He states that in a large part

[150] For a more careful notice of one of the books here cited, see a letter, by the present writer, in the "Nation" of New York, LXXI, 1900, pp. 132-134.

of the East the Persian word *nard* has been adopted, with some changes of form, as the title of the game; he likewise mentions *nerd ardeshir* (derived, he says, from the name of the inventor, Ardesher Bābākan), which became *nardsher*, and remarks that a Hebrew lexicologist errs when he makes the last word signify "*dade al-nerd*, i. e. *tesseras nerdicas*," the dice used at *nard*. He goes on to state that the Hebrews formed from the Greek the word "kubīa" (from κύβος) as the name of the game; and that this word was also received into Arabic in almost the same form, a Turkish writer declaring that "el-qūba" is the game which is called *nard*. Hyde makes the game identical with the "*scripta duodecim*" of the Latins, quoting many passages from classic authors. Of English names given to various games played on the table-board he enumerates "tric-trac" ("in Anglia vocamus *tic-tac*"), Irish, "back-gamon," "doublets" or "queens-game" (the last being in French, he says, "*tables rabbatues* or *dames rabbatues*, or *dames avallées*"). He derives back-gamon, [sic] in the etymological manner of his age, from *back-game-on*, which he declares to be the same as "back again and then game on," referring to the forward and return movement of the men. The French title of a variety of tables, *verquier*, he tells us is in Flemish *verkeer*; in Danish *forkeering* and in German, *verkehrung*.

"The points of the tables" as he styles them in English, are called in French *rayons*; in Italian, *case*; in Arabic, *baijut* (sing. *bēt*); in Persian *khanaha* (sing. *khāna*), signifying, in the last two languages named, "house." He records the appellations given to the die and dice in different tongues (writing erroneously in Danish, *terming* instead of *terning*), as Latin, *tesserae* (giving the derivation), and *aleae*; old Greek, κύβος but called in the dictionary of Hesychius γόλλος; in modern Greek ζάρι, αζάρι and τά ζάρια; in Turkish, *zār*, the writer taking care to assert that he does not know whether the Turkish comes from the modern Greek, or the modern Greek from the Turkish. He explains correctly the low Latin *dadus* and its modern derivatives; then follows a chapter on the terms *púrgos*, *turricula* and *fritillus* illustrated by many classical passages. It is in his chapter "De tesserarum jactibus, et de lusibus," that Hyde cites the writer Cardanus, an Italian mathematical and miscellaneous author of the XVIth century: "In our age the best known games of the table are with three dice, *speraïnum*, *speraïi* and *speraïonum*, whence the board itself is called *speraïnum*. In the vulgar tongue of Italy they call them *sbaraïnum*, &c." Calcagninus seems to derive the name from *sperando*, but in Italian *sbaraiare* signifies to 'scatter' and *sbarainum* what is scattered. Other three noted games with two dice are: *docadiglium*, which is of two kinds, the small and great [the long]; also *canis martius*, which demands much more ingenuity; and another game called *minoretta*, also of two sorts, major and minor." Hyde then informs us that Bernardo da Parigi says that *sbaraglino* or *sbaraglio* [see a later page], is the game which is called in Turkish *tauli* or *tavuli*. Hyde then continues, saying that the Orientals have a peculiar kind of game at tables, which is generally known as *tawla* or *tavola*; another, more intricate, is called in Arabic *muratjī*, which has been explained as signifying *speratum* or *res sperati*, because in it victory is often hoped for but not obtained; it is the same as the above named Flemish or Dutch *verkeer*; another is called *tukāti* or *taukāti*, perhaps the same as the English *tic-tac*. Then he mentions a game of the Persians, styled *ferīd* meaning "simple." The general name for

nard in Sanskrit is *dutu* and a particular kind of it, *oshkaka-kurido* (?). He learns that the board is used in India for a game called *tchupur*; further on he gives extracts from the Greek (Agathias Scholasticus) reciting the playing of tables by the emperor Zeno [d. 491]; and from the Persian, Firdausī, and the Arab, Ibn Kalikan — all in the original as well as Latin translations. Subsequently he tells the various stories of the invention of *nard* by Palamedes, Ardesher Bābakān and others.

So much for Hyde, of whose heaped-up erudition on this theme it is difficult to give any adequate idea; his chapters relating to the game, before he begins to treat of the pure dice games, are entitled: I. De nerdiludii nominibus; II. De nerdiludii tabella; III. De tesseris seu aleis; IV. De frustulis seu trunculis lusoriis; V. De turricula, fritillo, &c.; VI. De tesserarum jactibus et de lusibus et de aliquot vocabulis lusoriis; VII. De primario nerdiludii scopo; VIII. De nerdiludii antiquitate et primo auctore, including a section styled "De nerdiludio chinensium." It will be noticed, however, that the author is not very full or precise about the method of playing the various games or varieties which he names, but this is doubtless the result of the vagueness characterizing his Oriental and other sources.

The impressions then, which we get from these narratives relating to *nard* are, firstly, that its origin, if we may regard the mythical accounts as of any historical value, is to be assigned to Persia rather than to India, although chess and *nard* apparently make their earliest historical appearance in contiguous regions of those two lands; secondly, that among the Arabic peoples, at all events, *nard* preceded chess, or was at least as early as it. The Mohammedan legal traditions, as Dr. Van der Linde points out ("Quellenstudien," p. 7), allude to *nard* as existing in the Prophet's life-time, but make no mention of chess before his death. The first clear contemporary utterance in regard to Arabic chess is in a letter (780) written by the Caliph Mahdi, rebuking the people of Mecca for their loose habits, among them being the practice of playing both *nard* and chess; and in the so-called "Kitab el-ghāni,"—apparently a poetical miscellany — the compiler of which died in 967, we find mention of *nard*, chess and of a game which resembled morris as well. The first Arabic author of a practical work on chess is stated to be el-'Adli, a noted player (the date of whose treatise is uncertain, but is seemingly to be placed before 862) who is reported to have likewise composed a book on *nard* ("Kitāb el-nard"). The two games long continued to exist beside each other, and to be contrasted with each other, in the Arabic world, for in the XVIth century Muhammed Sukaiker, of Damascus (Hyde, II, p. 54, cited also by V. d. Linde, "Quellenstudien," p. 24) wrote a work to prove the superiority of chess to *nard*. In the Gamara, or Babylonian Talmud, appears, in a Hebrew form from the Persian, the word *nerdshīr*, that is, the game of *nard*, in which place it can certainly not be much later than the VIth century. If its insertion in that production, as seems undeniable, took place in Syria, it would be surely earlier than we could expect to encounter any allusion to chess in that part of Asia. This Talmudic title of the game (*nerdshír*) is explained by various early European Hebrew philologers, such as Nathan ben Jechiel (Rome 1103), Kalonymos ben Kalonymos (1322), and others, all agreeing in the opinion that it signifies a game either identical with, or similar to *nard*. The word is also cited by Prophiat Duran (known as Ephodæus), a Hebrew from Northern Spain, in 1403—its latest appearance

in Europe according to Dr. M. Steinschneider's exhaustive "Schâch bei den Juden" (see V. d. Linde's "Geschichte," I., p. 157). No reference to chess occurs in the Talmud. It is historically significant that the Byzantine Greeks did not receive the word *nard* from Arabic, or Persian, or Hebrew sources. They only knew the game by its Latin title, which they adopted, and from which they made several derivatives (see p. 81), proving that the diversion came to the Greek world from the West, that is by way of Italy. On the other hand Byzantium, as the reader will remember, first obtained the game of chess and its name (ζατρίκιον) from the Arabs, at a time when its people had already come into contact with their subsequent conquerors. *Nard*, then, must have already had time to assume its European appellation (tables) before it reached the Bosphorus — an important consideration.[151]

Nearly all English writers — from Hyde in 1694 to Wright 1859 — just as they make "tables" the same as backgammon, also regard backgammon as the modern representative of "nard." All that we have written makes us therefore ready — after the style of so many chess historians — for a series of conjectures, which is as follows: The existence of the game we are investigating may be divided into three stages; 1. The period of *nard*, from its invention or earliest appearance in Southwestern Asia — according to one tradition in Persia — before A. D. 800, to its arrival in Europe (shall we say in Spain, or in Italy during the Arabic occupation of Sicily ?) during which period, so far as we can learn, it was always played with thirty men, whose movements were made in accordance with the casting of dice on a board of twice twelve "points"; 2. The period of *tables*, from its arrival in Spain or Italy, coming from the Arabic world, to the XVIth century. In Europe it would find a more or less corrupted Latin tongue still in use in Italy, and, possibly existing there and elsewhere, the traditions of an old Latin game called *tabula* or *tabulae* (mentioned under one of those names by Justinian in the VIth century, and by Isidore of Seville in the VIIth century. Perhaps the old native game itself was still lingering, being possibly the Roman *duodecim scripta*. Because, in this newly-landed game, each player had really his own "table," with its twelve points, it took the name of *tabulae* (*ludus tabularum*) whence "tavole" and "tables," the dice used being called by a low Latin name, *dadi*. Unfortunately, during the early half of this period, beyond the facts that the game was played on a flat table (somehow divided into two parts), and that the throw of the dice directed the movements of the pieces, we cannot, at present, give any detailed account of its method of play; in the latter part of the period we know much more about it. 3. The period of *backgammon*, (trictrac) from the XVIth century until the present time, played, like the ancient *nard*, with thirty men on twelve points, with the essential assistance of dice, and, like the mediæval *tables*, on a board divided into two parts, each with its two subdivisions. The change of name was not unlikely owing to the predominating popularity of a single variety of the game styled *backgammon* (or, on the continent, *trictrac*) aided by the fact that "tables" began to be regarded as a generic term for all diversions whose movements were carried on upon a flat surface, or table,

[151] Chess can hardly be regarded as a game of great popularity in the new Greece, although the country's later literature possesses a manual of its practice, but among those who do play it the old Arabic-Byzantine term is still employed, alternating with σκακι, one of the numerous loan-words from the Italian (*scacchi*) in daily use in all the Greek towns.

and was no longer suitable for a special "table-game." After the completion of the change from the Asiatic-European to the better developed and more attractive modern chess — a process virtually ended, say in 1475 — tables was less and less practiced, and was nearly superseded, in higher circles, by its revised and perfected rival Indian game. But the former was in time again revived, perhaps with prettier and more decorative boards — generally united with chessboards — with more neatly made dice-boxes and other attractive changes in the apparatus or in the mode of play, after which its new names—*backgammon*, *trictrac*, *puff*—quite superseded its old one — only a shadowy form of which was left in the languages of the two Southern European peninsulas. It need not be said that to make all these hypotheses absolute certainties, a good deal of extended and careful research is needed. But on the whole we think that, after all the statements made, there is no longer much doubt that we may fairly be allowed to consider nard-tables-backgammon as one continuous development, constituting the story of a single intellectual outgrowth during some 1300 or 1400 years of existence.

The variation of the problem which remains unsolved and possibly unsolvable, is the light in which we are to consider the old Roman game, *duodecim scripta*, the twelve-line diversion, which so many investigators have declared to be identical with the modern backgammon. Is there really any historical connection between the two? Did *nard* reach Rome at a very early day by some mysterious route — by means of traders, or wanderers, or by the slow process of tribal contact, and taking a new name become naturalized? Or did an original Latin or Etruscan or Pelasgic game make its way to the lands beyond the Tigris, and be there re-christened *nard*? Or did the *duodecim scripta* die with imperial Rome, or slumber, half-forgotten, until its Oriental congener reached the Italic shores—so like in form to the Roman amusement that its arrival was virtually a revival of it? We have spoken (p. 122, *note*) of a remarkable publication by one of the most remarkable scholars of our day, Domenico Comparetti, being an essay upon an ancient Roman mirror, having on its reverse the graceful figures of two youths engaged at the game of *duodecim scripta*. We reproduce here (fig. 17) the table as there represented, but without the figures beside it. We have already noticed that no men are visible on the table. In the complete design the male figure at the left has his left arm raised with the hand extended, palm upwards, and nearly open, but as if it held some small object, or objects, not quite visible. The right hand points to the lines on the board and is resting just above them. Comparetti seems to think that the elevated hand holds the dice preparatory to throwing them, while the lower one indicates to the fair player opposite that the game is about to begin. It will be seen that the board has twelve lines, with an open space around them just inside the board's margin, that is to say that the scheme is not unlike that of tables-backgammon, except that here the twelve points formed

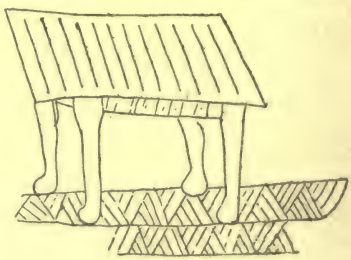


Fig. 17.

by the ends of the lines on each side begin at the centre of the board and run towards the margin, whereas in backgammon they start from the outer margin of the board, on either side, and run toward the centre. Comparetti likewise suggests that the men are absent because the game has not yet commenced. Whatever may be the interpretation of this noteworthy relic of antiquity, it is satisfactory that we have at length some trustworthy testimony as to the exact shape of the apparatus used in this old Roman game. Whether it helps to establish any real relation to the game we have been treating of at such length, is another matter—one to be decided hereafter.

An event which was not without its influence upon the old "tables," as upon some other games of its period, particularly those into which chance largely entered, was the introduction into use of playing-cards, a form of gaming in many respects both more convenient and more attractive than that afforded by dice. This new medium of diversion contributed, doubtless, on the one hand, to the decadence of "tables," and on the other, perhaps, led to the modification of the principal form of the ancient table-game, and especially to its change of name—until it finally assumed the title, in England, of "backgammon" and, in France, of "trictrac." Nor is it impossible that the same incident had something to do with the debasement of the morris game, and its banishment from court circles to become the amusement of rude rustics. Cards, manufactured from cotton, were pretty surely known in Spain as early as the last quarter of the XIIIth century, and very soon thereafter in Italy; their use had already spread to France, Germany and Holland in the latter half of the XIVth; and in 1403 their introduction, as well as that of chessmen, into England was forbidden (act 4. Edward IV, iv, 1) for the benefit of the home-made articles; and a play of 1400 has the phrase, "Using cardes, dice and cupes smalle." Chess, as a game of pure skill, suffered less from the popularity of cards, in spite of the fact that the new mode of diversion owed many of its features to the Indian game, having to do, like that, with kings, and queens and knights (knaves), and having both its figures of high degree (the court cards, or, more properly, the "coat cards") and its pawn-like forces of low degree (the spot-cards).

Allusions to the mediæval game of tables are perhaps more frequent in the old French than in any other early literature. In looking at the practical side of modern backgammon, its assumed successor, we shall therefore begin with France. We give, in a foot-note, a brief account of an interesting and elaborate French XVIIIth century manual of the game by Soumille, in which we find how little is the difference between the *trictrac* of then and now.[152] The most pretentious modern treatment of the game, in

[152] One of the notable books in the scanty literature of backgammon is that of the abbé Soumille, "Le grand Trictrac," the second edition of which was published at Avignon 1756 (8°, pp. 438). Both its sober style and its neat typography make it an attractive volume. It contains many scores of positions on diagrams, which occur between two players, classically denominated Cloris and Damon. The latter has the lower part of the board (or that nearest the reader), equivalent to the position given to "white" in chess treatises, while Cloris is supposed to sit opposite, or at the upper side of the board (like "black"). The technical terms are very fully explained, though no allusion to the history of the game is anywhere made. Each of the four divisions, having six points, into which the board is divided, is called a *jan*; each player thus has two *jans*; the one in which the men are piled up at the commencement of the game is called the *petit-jan*, the other the *grand-jan*. Various positions brought about by different throws of the dice are likewise styled *jans*—the *jan de rencontre*, for instance, being two exactly similar (or equal) first throws by the two

all its varieties, with which we are familiar, is to be found in a French work, the "Grande encyclopédie des jeux" edited by Moulidars—a book already cited—in its chapter, "Le trictrac" (I., pp. 142-189). This treatise attempts to portray and explain no fewer than eleven games played, with greater or less divergencies, on the backgammon-board. At the outset, its compiler indulges in a little philology, literature and philosophy of a character not very profound, but which we will cite in its entirety: "*Trictrac* would appear to have been known to the ancients, if it be true that its name, instead of being derived onomatopoetically from the noise made by the dice

players, while there are the *jan qui ne peut*, *jan de deux tables*, *jan de mézéas* and *contre-jan de mézéas*. The points, alternately black and white, of the board are styled *flèches* or *lames*; the holes in the frame of the board for marking games are *trous*, and the movable pegs used in them, *fichets*. The men or pieces are known as *dames*, or, according to this author, sometimes as *tables*, the board being the *tablier*. A point on which two men are standing is a *caze* (*case* = house), and one on which there is only one, a *demi-caze*; the same term is applied to certain positions, and we have the *caze du diable*, *caze de l'écolier*, *caze du cinq* and so on; *cazes alternes* (or *rateau*) is a title given to a position in which every alternate point of the board is void of men. A *fausse caze* is a position brought about by erroneous or irregular play, and has its penalties, as do such errors at chess. *École* is a neglect to make or mark points, and to send one *à l'école* is when the opponent, observing the omission, adds the uncounted points to his own score. The notation employed is based on the indication of the 24 *flèches* of the board by the 24 characters of the alphabet such as is shown in fig. 16. Doublets, in throwing the dice, have the customary special titles as: two aces, *ambes-as*, or *bezas*; two douces, *tous les deux* (sportively *tous les dieux*); two treys, *ternes* (jestingly, *lanternes*); two fours, *carmes*; two fives, *quines*; double sixes, *sonnés*. The *partie* may be either a *jeu ordinaire*, in which each player is limited to his own side of the board, moving his men only from *m* to *a*, or from *φ* to *n*; or a *jeu de retour* (a true "backgammon," that is the *game* and *back*), in which Cloris continues to move until the counters are pushed from *m* (by way of *l*, *k*, *i*, &c) clear to *φ*, or through both tables; while Damon plays his from *n* (by way of *o*, *p*, *q*) to *n*. In beginning a game each player places his 15 men in 3 or 4 piles on the point in one of the outside extreme corners of his side of the board; the point then receives the name of the *talon*, and the *jan* in which the *talon* is becomes the *petit-jan*; the *talon* and *petit-jan* of the adversaries are exactly opposite each other; for instance, if the counters of Cloris are placed on *m*, that point is the *talon* and *petit-jan* of Damon. The throws of the dice may be utilized to move either one or two men; thus, with the throw deuce-trey, one man may be moved to a second point and another to a third, or a single counter may be moved to a fifth point. At the end of the volume are many positions similar in character to problems at chess, intended to indicate the proper method of play under certain circumstances. The book has, in all, nearly three hundred diagrams, illustrative of games or exceptional positions. These are apparently not engraved but made up of backgammon type, composed of pieces representing the four sides or rims of the board (having the *trous* or holes, white on black); black and white points having one to three white or black men on them, or each supporting one of the dice to be placed where no points with men are needed, in order to show the throw just made and now to be played; and little circles to be placed near the small ends of the points to represent the score-points, and so on. The copperplate frontispiece of the volume pictures a game of backgammon on a very large board, placed on a handsome table in a fine apartment, the players being a gentleman and lady, with a second gentleman as a spectator. It is not known whether Soumille was the first to give the names of Cloris and Damon to the two supposed players in treatises on *trictrac*, but the tradition is still so far powerful that Moulidars bestows on his imaginary combatants their initials (C and D). The author gives a brief description (pp. 391-2) of *trictrac à écrire* and (pp. 392-3) of a much simpler variety to be played by four or five players, styled *courir la poule*. Some space is devoted to a discussion of the possible combinations of the dice (pp. 306-316). There are some singular technical terms, indicating phases of the game, and which are now disused, such as *Margot la fendue* and *passage du pont*. As a specimen of Soumille's style we cite his notice of a method of winning still in vogue (pp. 390-391): "Gagner une partie *grande-bredoüille* c'est marquer 12 trous de suite, tandis que l'autre joüeur n'en marque aucun. Le premier qui commence à marquer un ou plusieurs trous, n'exclut pas l'autre du droit de gagner *grande-bredoüille*, pourvû que ce

and the counters, had its origin in the two Greek words τρὶς τρακὸς, which signify *thrice difficult to play and to understand*. The abbé Barthélemy in his 'Voyage d'Anacharsis,' claims that it was practiced at Athens. It is proved that the Romans knew it. They called it *duodena scripta*, or *ludus XII scriptorum*, as is demonstrated by Saumaise [Salmasius, 1588-1658], in a special treatise, in which he compares the ancient with the modern *trictrac*. But in its progress this game has undergone an infinitude of changes before arriving at the point where we now find it. At first, probably its devotees played the kind which we call *dames rabattues*, which is of great

dernier fasse 12 trous de suite sans interruption. La *grande-bredoüille* ne se paye qu'autant qu'on en est convenu au commencement du jeu : alors celui qui fait 12 trous de suite gagne double enjeu, c'est-à-dire, autant que s'il gagnoit deux parties. Le premier qui commence à marquer, n'a pas besoin de distinguer son fichet; mais lorsqu'il est interrompu par le second, celui-ci met une marque à son fichet, qu'on appelle *cravatte*, c'est un jetton percé, ou un morceau de papier, qui sert à constater la suite noninterrompuë de ses trous. Cela s'appelle *entrer en bredoüille*, & quand le premier peut à son tour interrompre le second, il lui ôte la *cravatte*, & alors ni l'un ni l'autre n'ont rien à prétendre sur la *grande bredoüille*. On est en usage dans certains païs de faire payer un enjeu & demi à celui qui ne passe pas *le pont*, c'est-à-dire, qui ne fait pas au moins 7 trous avant que l'autre ait achevé le tour. Mais la *grande-bredoüille*, comme le *passage du pont*, dépendent absolument de la convention mutuelle des joüeurs au commencement du jeu." The abbé, Bernard Laurent Soumille, was of Villeneuve-les-Avignons. He invented some agricultural implements, especially a sower, which he described in a pamphlet, and wrote a treatise on losing and winning at dice ("La loterie insidieuse, ou tableau général de tous les points tant à perte qu'à profit, qu'on peut faire avec sept dés." Avignon 1773). His "Grand Trictrac" was first published at Avignon in 1738, and was followed by the edition of 1756, by which a third of Paris 1766, and perhaps by others. A sketch of Soumille's life will be found in Barjavel's "Dictionnaire biographique du département de Vaucluse" (Carpentras 1841); he is likely always to remain the classic writer on *trictrac*. Earlier than Soumille was a smaller French anonymous work, "Le jeu de trictrac, comme on le joue aujourd'huy. Enrichy de Figures. Et d'une Méthode très-aisée; pour apprendre de soy-même à joüer ce Jeu en perfection. A Paris, Chez Henry Charpentier, ... M. DC. XCVIII." (12mo, pp. 162, besides 13 unnumbered folios). This treatise, though far inferior to the detailed production of Soumille, is well-executed for its time, and is perhaps the first to give illustrations of positions, which seem to be engraved. Of these there are six (pp. 67, 84, 104, 108, 111, 122). This work was reprinted, much enlarged, five years later, under the title of "Le jeu du trictrac, enrichy de figures Avec les Jeux Du revertier, du toute-table, du tourne-case, des dames rabatues, du plein, et du toc. Seconde edition. Revuë, Corrigée, et augmentée. A Paris, Chez Henry Charpentier, ... M. DCCI." (12mo, pp. 198 + 111, with 20 unnumbered folios). In the copy used by the present writer, the supplement (occupying the second series of 111 pages, and 13 of the 20 unnumbered folios) has this title-page: "Suite du trictrac, contenant les Regles de Jeux du revertier, du toute-table, du tourne-case, des dames rabatues, du plain et du toc. Comme on les Jouë [sic] aujourd'huy. A Paris. Chez Henry Charpentier, ... M. D. C. XCIX." None of the games enumerated on this second title-page were treated in the 1698 edition, but it will be seen from the date that the supplement was probably intended for that first edition, having been printed a year later. The second edition contains the six illustrations of the first and in the same order (pp. 57, 77, 95, 99, 102, 114), and no others. The chapters, in the main work, have been increased from 17 to 20; while the important part of the "Suite" is the eleven brief chapters (pp. 40-62), devoted to the "Règles du jeu du toute-table," showing that the old-fashioned English backgammon was then played in France precisely as in England. The historical portion added to the later issue is contained in the new first chapter; we cite the paragraph containing it (pp. 1-2): "Je ne diray rien de l'antiquité de ce Jeu, et je n'entreprendray pas de décider si ce sont les François ou les Allemands qui en ont esté les Inventeurs; Je sçay qu'il y a eû des gens qui ont donné cette gloire aux Allemands, et que plusieurs autres l'ont attribuë aux François: Mais je crois que si l'on en juge par ce qui nous paroist journellement, l'on se déterminera facilement en faveur des François, et que l'on conviendra qu'on joüe mieux ce beau Jeu à la Cour de France, qu'à celle de Vienne." From all this it may be seen that *chauvinisme* is no merely modern sentiment in France, and that the unknown author was not hampered by tradition.

simplicity, offering little scope for combinations; next came *jacquet*, scarcely more complex. We may regard as somewhat later *garanguet*, and the game of *toute-table* or *gamon;* and as coming last of all *trictrac*, made up from all the different table games, the invention of which appears to date from the XVth century. This last game has itself undergone modifications; and its rules were not definitely established until about the commencement of the reign of Louis XIV, at which time it was enthusiastically cultivated by persons of quality. Regnard presents us a player possessed of the demon of trictrac and makes him say: (a. 1, sc. IV):

. . . . . Une *école* maudite
Me coûte en un moment douze *trous* tout de suite;
Que je suis un grand chien! Parbleu, je te saurai,
Maudit jeu de trictrac! ou bien je ne pourrai.

A little further on (a. 1; sc. X) the poet puts these lines into the mouth of a certain *chevalier d'industrie*:

Je suis pour vous servir, gentilhomme auvergnac,
Docteur dans tous les jeux et maître de trictrac;
Mon nom est *Tout-à-Bas*, vicomte de *La Case*,
Et votre serviteur, pour terminer ma phrase.
. . . . . .
Je sais dans un trictrac, quand il faut un *sonnez*,
Glisser des dés heureux ou chargés ou pipés;
Et quand mon *plein* est fait, gardant mes avantages,
J'en substitue aussi d'autres prudents et sages,
Qui n'offrant à mon gré que des as à tous coups,
Me font en un instant enfiler douze *trous*.
. . . . . .
. . . . . Je veux, par mon savoir extrême,
Que vous escamotiez un dé comme moi-même.

The italicised words in these citations are terms used at backgammon. The poet, Jean François Regnard, lived between the years 1655 and 1709. The editor of the "Encyclopédie" thus continues: "The changes which supervened in court manners at the end of the reign of Louis XIV led gradually to less practice of *trictrac*, which nevertheless still remains a favourite household game, and, in its modified form, known as *tric trac à écrire*, is yet held in honour in many drawing-rooms. The Greek etymology of the word *trictrac*, if it were authentic, would not signify that the game is extremely complicated in its method of play; it would mean only that, to be played well, it demands much presence of mind and quiet calculation." Mr. Moulidars is evidently no very profound Græcist. The huge Larousse cyclopædic dictionary also has a historical reference to the game. After mentioning its invention by the Persians it goes on to say "Mais il est certain que les anciens connaissaient des jeux analogues ou le *trictrac* lui-même; tels étaient, entre autres, le *diagramismos* des Grecs et le *duodena scripta* des Romains. On le trouve désigné, dans les auteurs du moyen âge, sous le nom du jeu de *tables*, qu'il porte encore aujourd'hui en allemand (*brettspiel*), et en Portugais (*jogo de tabolas*)." The last statement is not wholly accurate so far as the modern German is concerned, *brettspiel* being generally employed as a generic term for all games played on a board.

Not infrequent are the appearances of backgammon in the literature of the French lands. As we shall see, when treating of the technical vocabu

lary of *trictrac*, the game was known to Rabelais in the XVIth century. A passage ascribed to the poet Villon in the same century, to which we shall also refer later on, contains the word *trictrac*, but not as the denomination of a game. François de Bonnivard (b. 1496) — the original hero of Byron's "Prisoner of Chillon" — in his "Chronique de Genève" (IV, 4), says that before the battle of Pavia (1525) the Spanish and the French "se pourmenoient par sur le Piedmont et y jouoient au *trique trac*." Nearly of the same time is the occurrence of the word in Etienne Pasquier's "Recherches" (1560) in a passage soon to be cited. The word is found in several early Latin treatises on games. Salmasius tells us that "præter *trictracum* quem vocamus, alium etiam ludum cum tesseris et calculis in tabulâ lusitare consuevimus;" he speaks also of what both French and English authors long called the "*grand trictrac*," saying "hodie in eo *trictraci* genere quem *magnum* vulgo vocant;" while Bulenger (1626) informs us that "apud nos hodie 12 lineæ, 24 [?] calculi, vocamus *majorem trictracum*." In the same way, many years before, Hyde shows himself familiar with the word, without giving it a Latin form, as when he comments on the extremely complicated character of French *trictrac*; "Inter lusus ad tabulam, omnium difficillimus est Gallorum *trictrac*, quem modo sibi peculiari exercent." The essayist, La Bruyère (1646-1696), in his "Caractères" (1688), has an amusing description of a distracted backgammon player: "Il joue au *tric trac*; il demande à boire, on lui en apporte: c'est à lui à jouer, il tient le cornet d'une main et un verre de l'autre, et, comme il a une grande soif, il avale les dés et presque le cornet, jette le verre d'eau dans le *trictrac* et inonde celui contre qui il joue." In a private letter Madame de Maintenon, the consort of Louis XIV, says "Mme. de Dangeau demandera, en bâillant, un *tric-trac*.... voila comme on vit à la cour." This is in a communication to the duc de Noailles, dated January 7, 1700. Some years before, Madame Desjardins, better known as Madame de Villedieu (1631-1683), allows us to catch a glimpse of the game in two countries as it were. She says, late in the XVIIth century, writing about Holland: "Nous jouions ensemble au *revercquier*, qui est le *tric trac* de ce pays-là." In a previous generation we find a minor writer (Etienne Tabourot, known as the seigneur des Accords, whose book was published in 1648) employing the word *triquetraquer* in the sense of a player of *trictrac*, reminding us of the Dutch *tiktakker*. Voltaire says, in a latter dated December 8, 1767: "J'avance que ce peuple [les Indiens] dont nous tenons les échecs, le trictrac.... est malheuresement d'une superstition qui effraie la nature."

If we mistake not it was the Swiss *littérateur* Bonstetten, who said about the beginning of the XIXth century:

> **Mais lors que soixante ans nous viendront renfermer,**
> **Il faut le *triquetrac* et les cartes aimer.**

Another and a greater writer, who died nearly two generations since, Balzac, the admired of Thackeray, spoke of backgammon in less pleasant terms: "Le bruit du *trictrac* est insupportable à ceux qui ne savent pas ce jeu, un des plus difficiles qui existent." The game has produced in France one or two singular phrases, such as that which characterizes an able player at backgammon as one who is able to *abbatre bien du bois* — the *bois* referring to the wooden men. We must leave other passages containing direct or

remote references to the game, or to the terms and phrases used by its players, until we have given some account of the game itself as practiced by the French.

The Moulidars manual describes, first of all, *trictrac*, to which, as the principal form of backgammon in France, it devotes no fewer than thirty-five pages. This section is occupied first with the apparatus employed, then with the general method of play; afterwards follow sections on the dice and their possible combinations, on *l'école*, on the *jans*, on the *bredouille*, on privileges allowed under certain circumstances to the players, on the methods of counting and marking, on the value of the different *coups*; to these succeed a vocabulary of terms, the laws of the game, advice to the players, and thereafter a complete game, recorded in detail and illustrated with notes and diagrams of positions. The apparatus of the game, we are told, consists of the board, the fifteen black and fifteen white men, the three *bredouilles* for marking the minor points, the two *fichets*, or pegs of ivory or wood, for marking the game points, and the two dice.

Each player begins by placing his fifteen pieces in three piles, of five men each, on the *talon*, which is the first or starting point. The writer observes that almost all the rules published at the present time state that the *talon* is the point on the board at the extreme left of each player. This is a grave error. It is the extreme left point for one player, and the extreme right point for his adversary, since it is necessary that the two *talons* should be opposite each other. If the play take place during the day, the board is to be opened near a window and the men are to be piled and placed on the side which is more remote from the light. That is to say, if the window be at the left of one player and at the right of another, the first places his pieces on the first point to the right and the second on his first point to the left, in such a manner that the men of both parties are opposite the light. The pieces of one color are then moved in a direction opposite to that taken by the pieces of the other color; while, if the two players place their *talon*, both either at their right hand or their left, as other contemporary manuals explain, the pieces of both would move in the same direction, which would not produce the result desired, since each player is to make with his men the tour of the table, starting from his *talon*, and finishing at the point opposite to it, that is at the *talon* of his opponent. If a game be played at night, then the *talons* are at the end of the board farthest from the lamp, or other principal light in the apartment. By agreement, however, the *talons* can be fixed, and the game begun at the other extremity of the board. Each player plays, in any case, through his own side of the board and then around into the side of his opponent. It will be seen (fig. 18) that the quarter of the board from 1 to 6, is called the *petit jan*, and that from 7 to 12 the *grand jan*. In moving, according to the numbers thrown with the dice, the *talon* is not counted, so that if a six-throw is to be played it would go to the point marked 7. In deciding upon first moves, each player throws one die, and the player having the larger number of pips opens the game. The names given to the doublets by Moulidars are: double ace, *ambesas*, *beset*, or *tous les as;* and then in their order, *double deux*; *terne* or *tournes; quaterne* or *carme*; *quine*; and *sonnez*. If a player fail to mark his points before again touching his men, his adversary adds the points to his own score, which action is called, as in Soumille's time, *envoyer son adversaire à l'école*.

We are furthermore told, as an etymological guess, that the word *jan* comes from *Janus*, "a Roman divinity having many faces, thereby symbolically designating the divers aspects in which *trictrac* may be viewed—the *jan* being a *coup* which may result to the advantage or the disadvantage of either side" (another writer—it may be stated in passing—suggests its derivation from the proper name *Jean*, perhaps in its sense of "Jack"). These *coups* are eleven in number: the *jan de six tables ou de trois coups*; the *jan de deux tables*; the *contre-jan de deux tables*; the *jan de méséas* or *Mézéas* (written both with and without a capital initial); the *contre-jan de méséas*; the *petit jan*; the *grand jan*; the *jan de retour*; the *jan de récompense*; the *jan qui ne peut*; the *jan de rencontre*. Most of these *jans* count in favor of the player, who, by the throw of the dice either may or must effectuate them (that is, bring about the positions indicated by their names); in some other cases they count in favor of his adversary. In order to understand what a *jan* of this sort is, we translate the descriptions of two: "The 'jan of six tables,' or 'of three moves,' is when, at the beginning of a game, a player is able to move six of his pieces by three casts of the dice, five to points 2-6 and one to point 7, called the *sonnez* point. It counts for four (minor) points for the player making it. The 'jan de retour' is when one has occupied, by more than a single piece, each point in the adversary's first quarter of the board, called the *petit jan*." Again, we learn that a player is said to be *en bredouille* when he makes twelve points before his adversary has made a single point. *La grande bredouille* is when the player has made two game-points (*trous*), his opponent having scored none (the *bredouilles*, as the reader will recall, also signify the three round counters mentioned above, used to score the minor points as they are made); when twelve such minor or playing points have been made, the player scores them as one game-point, with his *fichet* in the holes on the rim of his side of the board.

We group together, without attempting to class them in their proper order, some other notable rules and particularities of *trictrac*. The player winning the first twelve points, or, which amounts to the same thing, scoring his first game-point (*trou*), is entitled to say whether he will "go off" (*s'en aller*), or whether he will "hold on" (*tenir*), that is, continue to play the game as it stands. In the former case, the points made by his opponent are wiped out (as are his own surplus points above the twelve demanded for his game-point), and the pieces of both parties are re-entered, as before, on the *talon* of each player in three piles. A renewal (*reprise*), that is, a second section of the *partie*, is then begun. If the winner of the first section does not declare his intention to "go off," then the play, after he has marked his *trou*, goes on, as previously, the defeated player keeping the points he has already gained, and the winner marking those remaining, if any, after he has used twelve to make his own *trou*. It is often difficult to determine whether the winner of the *trou* shall insist upon commencing anew, or whether he shall risk a continuation of the game from its existing position. If he consider the state of the game so favorable for himself that it outweighs the minor points already secured by the loser, and with which he will begin his scoring in the *reprise*, then he will decide to go on. Otherwise, he "goes off." As the game progresses, each combatant—a matter to which we allude elsewhere—must carefully watch the play of the other, since each

reckons not only the points he himself makes, but also those which his opponent through carelessness fails to score. If a player declare himself in a position to make a "hit" (a situation in which he might, by the rules of English backgammon, capture a man), his opponent must see that it would not be a false "hit" (a case of *battre à faux*). Such a false "hit" would be when his throw, say 6 and 3, might "hit the blot," if the numbers of the dice were played in combination (as 9), but which could not do so when played singly (as 6 and then 3), because both the third and the sixth point from the man to be moved are covered—that is to say, are each occupied by more than one hostile man, thus barring the removal of an adversary's man to either. Another peculiarity of scoring is that when a block of six covered points exists, and one player, being unable to pass it, cannot play any of his men, his opponent scores two minor points for each successive cast of the dice which cannot be utilized.

We add the briefest possible definitions of the games, other than *trictrac*, which are played in France on the backgammon-board. The *trictrac à écrire* is a game composed of a large number of points, so that the points cannot be marked by the pegs and *trous*, and must therefore be written. Its rules differ very slightly from those of the ordinary *trictrac*. A modification of it is the *trictrac à la chouette*, played by two persons against one, the one who is alone moving continuously to the end of the game, the other two alternately after having scored twice; another modification is the *trictrac à tourner*, the players being likewise three, each playing for himself. In the beginning two combine against one, but the first one of the two who loses a point, that is makes an error, goes out, but apparently resumes his place, when one of the actual players loses two points. The one of the three first obtaining the score agreed upon, wins the game. A second prominent variety, *garanguet*, is played with three dice. The men are entered at the beginning as in *trictrac*. When two of the dice thrown are alike, (that is, form a doublet) they are played doubly (that is, as if they had been four dice, each with the same number of points); if all three dice at one throw are alike, that is, if they form a triplet, they are played three times. The *jeu du toc* is the *tokkategli* or *tokkadille* of the Germans. The pieces are placed as at *trictrac;* they move in the same manner. The marking is, in general, the same, but the game is only a short one—he who scores first twelve minor points winning it. The movements of the men appear to be limited to the *petit jan*, that is to securing the six points of that quarter of the board. The *jeu du plein* is a variety of *trictrac* in which a player scores the game, having made a *plein* ("full"), that is, having secured, by at least two pieces on each, every point in that division of the board known as the *grand jan*. In the *jeu du toc* doublets do not count double, which they do in the *jeu du plein*. We are told that the title of the variety denominated *revertier* is derived from the Latin *revertere* meaning to turn, because the player causes his men to make the tour of the table, returning them into the division from which they started. Here the two players set the three piles of their men each on the extreme corner point at the left of his adversary. Their march is at first from the opponent's left to his right; having reached the extreme right corner of the opponent they pass on to and through the extreme left point of the player, and continue from his left to his right. One or two new terms are used in this game, but the rules, except as they concern the original placing of the men and the

course of their march, are very much the same as in *trictrac*. The next variety is known as *jacquet*. We must first observe that, contrary to the statement of Moulidars, Littré makes this to be the same as the ordinary English backgammon. "C'est le même," he says "que les Anglais nomment backgammon, et qu'en France on appelait autrefois *toutes-tables*, parce que les joueurs placent, en commençant, leurs dames sur toutes les tables du trictrac." It may be that *jacquet* was once styled *toutes-tables* (*toute-table*), but there is no doubt that the variety now so called is nearly or quite identical with our usual game. But to return to Moulidars. The men in *jacquet* are set as at *revertier*. A peculiar feature is that the men cannot be doubled upon any point until one of them has been made to pass through all four divisions of the board—this advanced piece receiving the name of the *courier*. To take him to his destination the player usually avails himself of his first doublet. Having thus pushed forward his *courier* the player may then proceed by advancing the others, by establishing *cases* (that is, by securing points through placing at least two men upon them), or by barring the passage of his adversary. The men who are not able to reach the fourth division receive the name of *cochonnets;* and a player left with a single *cochonnet* on his hands loses the game. The doublets are quadruplets (that is, double fives, for instance, count as twenty). A variety of *jacquet* is styled the *jacquet de Versailles,* and was invented to accelerate the game. Here, instead of multiplying the doublets by four, each number of the doublets thrown is multiplied by itself, thus double ace (one by one) is reckoned as only one; double two (two by two) gives to the player the right to play four points; while double six (six by six) permits him to play thirty-six. There are one or two minor changes in the rules, otherwise the game resembles the usual *jacquet*. The word *jacquet* may, or may not be connected with the Spanish name of backgammon, *chaquete*—in regard to which question see the pages which follow. The next game, *jeu de toute-table*, differs essentially from *trictrac*, being the ordinary, old-fashioned English game of backgammon, as it has been played by the Anglo-Saxon race for the last three or four centuries—the men, of course, placed in the beginning as in the figure given later on, in the section relating to the game in England. Moulidars says: "Le jeu de toute-table est à peu près oublié en France; mais il est encore très répandu en Angleterre, sous le nom de *backgammon*." The *jeu de tourne-case*, says the compiler, "is an original variant of *trictrac*, in which each of the two players has only three men which are to be moved until they are united on the last corner point, hence the name of the game—*tourne* [*terne?*] having signified three as an old technical term in games." The men are first placed outside of the board—the three of one player at his left, as they are to be moved [after duly entering each at the first point of the player's table?] one after the other to the corner of the second table which is at his right; the other player puts his pieces at his right and has to play them to the corner at his left. In this way the men of the two players start from the same side and move in the same direction on opposite tables. If either player throws a doublet, it is counted only as one, that is a double six is treated as six. A singular law is that each player must advance his men in order, as they are not permitted to pass each other. If, for instance, a player's first move is three points, and at the second he has the right to play four points, he must move the same counter, since the second

cannot go beyond the first, nor the third beyond the second. Nor can they be placed on the same point, except at the twelfth or final point (the *coin de repos*). The course of the men is thus one of peril, since they are frequently captured by the enemy. A piece is captured when a piece of the adversary can be placed upon the point in the opposite board occupying the same position and bearing the same number. To give an example, suppose that a player has a man on his seventh point, and that the adversary puts one of his men on his seventh point, exactly opposite that of the first player; the piece of the first player is captured, and the player must remove it from the board, putting it in its original position, from which it must recommence its march. He who first unites his three men on the twelfth point gains the *partie*. If he do this before his opponent has brought a single man to the *coin de repos* he wins a *partie double*.

The final variety described in this French treatise is styled *les dames rabattues*, that is to say, the game of the "unpiled men." It is one of the simplest of table-games, being one of pure chance. Its name comes from the fact that its players are obliged to "bring down" (*rabattre*), from the piles in which they lie, one of their men after the other. Each player puts his fifteen men in the side of his board nearest the light, in six piles thus: two on each of the three points less lighted and three on each of the three points nearest to the separating bar (or the hinges) of the board. There are then three piles of two each, and three piles of three each. A throw which cannot be played by a player may be played by his opponent, and he who has thrown a doublet retains the dice until he has thrown two differing ones. The first player casting the dice "brings down" two men from those on the point indicated by the dice. This he does by lifting the top piece from the pile and placing it in advance of the pile on the same point, that is nearer the pointed end. Having thus "flattened out," or placed all his men singly on the points, he then proceeds to repile them again, in accordance with the casts of the dice, as they were before. He who succeeds in first doing this is the winner in this very artless game.

The summarized account which we have given of the methods employed in *trictrac*, the principal form of backgammon in France, shows that the game has undergone little change in that country during the last two centuries. It is, in every important respect, identical with the description which we find in the abbé Soumille's treatise "Le grand trictrac," the first edition of which appeared in 1738. The older work, however, not only presents us a picture of the game in far greater detail, but is much more systematic in its arrangement and clearer in its language. The volume, except in its utter lack of historical information, is, in fact, one of the most comprehensive and interesting productions ever devoted to any game or sport. Its pages are almost wholly occupied with the single game called *trictrac*, although it describes briefly the *trictrac à écrire*, and a very simple diversion on the backgammon-board styled *courir la poule*, in which four or five players may take part (pp. 391-2). How far back this *trictrac* game goes, and how far it represents the most common variety of the mediæval "tables" it is, of course, not easy to decide.

Three things will strike the English observer, as he becomes familiar with the French *trictrac*, namely, that, in several characteristics, it differs widely from any kind of backgammon known to the Anglo-saxon world. In

the first place, its method of counting consists in points gained by bringing about, with the help of the dice, certain particular positions; by penalties imposed on the adversary for errors and omissions, and by ability to attack ("hit") the weak points of the opponent. In the second place—and this has to do with the final peculiarity just mentioned—the French game admits of no captures. A player is not allowed to really "hit a blot," but only to put himself in the position of "hitting a blot." In other words, he receives a certain number of points when he is able to capture an enemy's man standing alone on one of the points of the board, but he cannot proceed to actually effect the capture. In the third place, the points to be scored, to which we have hitherto alluded, and which we have ventured to call minor points, are marked by three tally-men, of which one is in use by one player and two by the other at different periods of the game. Moves, positions, threats to capture and the like sometimes count more, when they are, or might be effected as a result of having thrown doublets. When these minor playing-points amount to twelve or more, they form a major, or game-point, which is scored by means of a peg in one of the holes on the rim of the board, as we have previously explained. In the fourth place, a final noticeable dissimilarity between this French variety and the older English one consists in the fact that in the former the men are never "thrown out" of the board, or in any way removed from it. When the peg, scoring the major points, has been advanced through a certain number of holes agreed upon, or through all the twelve holes on the one or the other side of the board, the game is ended, leaving all the men in the board. It will be seen from what we have said, that *trictrac* is an amusement demanding much closer attention than either of the usual English games. This partly arises from the necessity of keeping the score as the game proceeds, partly from the number of possible positions, through the attainment of which the score may be increased, and partly from the necessity of attending not only to the points made by one's own play, but to the points which one's opponent omits to make.

To understand completely the philological character and relations of the word *trictrac* much further investigation is necessary. The word has more meanings than one, and it is difficult to say which is the original sense. In old French it signified, we are told by one authority, both the noise of dice—for that reason becoming the name of a game played with dice—and the noise made by hunters to frighten up ducks and other birds. It was also employed in the sense of the French *train*, that is "suite," "attendants," "equipage," "movement," and so on—Littré citing the following as an illustration of this last signification: "Méditer la patience de Dieu sur les péchés des hommes, et considérer le *trictrac* du monde d'aujourd'hui, qui est autant fou que jamais." This is from the letters (tome II., p. 421) of Gui Patin (1602-1672), and the word has here apparently the sense of "goings-on" or "march" (possibly resulting from its use to imply noise or confusion). *Trictrac* also means what in French is called *quinconce*, a word which comes from the Latin *quincunx* (*quinque unciae*), and which in the Roman tongue means a copper coin marked by (five) points, or small balls, to represent its value, being five-twelfths of the *as*. The French word *quinconce* however denotes—more definitely speaking—an arrangement of objects in relation to each other like the points, or circular "eyes," on the

dice used in playing backgammon. It occurs in the technical phrase *en trictrac*, applied to a plantation of trees, or other plants arranged in straight lines, but why such a phrase is used in arboriculture no French dictionary-maker has apparently been able to comprehend or ascertain. It comes, without doubt, from the resemblance of rows of plants, so arranged, to the lines of points on a backgammon-board. A similar phrase, *en échiquier*, is likewise employed by writers on the culture of trees—implying a distribution of plants in transverse lines like the squares of a chess-board. Another technical meaning of *trictrac*, used among hunters, is defined by Larousse, in his "Grand dictionnaire universel" (*sub voce*), as a "bruit fait par des chasseurs pour affaroucher les oiseaux aquatiques lorsqu'ils veulent les faire tomber dans leurs piéges." Still another is as a name applied to an "Ancien moulin à tabac manœuvré à bras," or, as it is defined, at greater length, by Littré, as the "Noms de certains moulins pour le tabac, à vis de serrage et bride supérieure, qui étaient manœuvrés par les hommes agissant directement à l'extremité de leviers fixés au sommet de l'arbre vertical de la noix." Finally it serves as the vulgar name of two birds, better known in French as the "draine" and the "traquet." But all these last definitions have nothing to do with the game of backgammon; they only serve to show that the word *trictrac*, as the representative of a peculiar sound, is of wide extent and great age. As we have elsewhere remarked, a very early occurrence of *trictrac* (in the writings of Villon, or, one of his contemporaries, in the XVth century) seems to be in the sense of "noisily." From this, and other instances near that date, it would appear as if the word were already in use before its application to the game of backgammon, that is to say while the word "tables" was still the general term to denote the game, or an old form of the game. Originally, then, as we feel authorized to assume, *trictrac* was one of a class of vocables formed by duplication, either through rhyme, with a differing initial, like "hurly-burly," or through a change of vowel in the two elements, as "knick-knack" and "zig-zag." This class of words is a very large one, and has not yet been adequately nor very scientifically studied. Not all of them are onomatopoetic. Moreover, such words are often formed in conversation, and do not always find their way into the dictionaries, just as one might say, in a rapid description, "mish-mash," thereby meaning a confused mixture, or "crish-crash," as describing a confused breaking. In this view it might be more proper to say that, in one or more of the Romance languages, a word already in existence, in other senses, was applied to the game of "tables" when its old name fell into desuetude. Meanwhile all the linguistic authorities, copying the French etymologists, insist upon the fact that the word *trictrac* originated as an imitation of the noise made in shaking the dice and casting them; one dictionary, that of Hatzfeld and Darmesteter (1900), goes even farther, and includes in this assertion also the noise of the pieces as they are moved from one point to another, or piled upon each other on the same point (*des dames qu'on case*). It is to be noted, on the other hand, that in the mediæval game the dice were not shaken, but thrown from the hand, a fact already hinted at, and also that the noise made by placing the counters on a point or upon each other is certainly very slight. Earlier in these pages, too, we have suggested that the coming into use of new-fashioned dice-boxes, making the noise of the dice

more observable, may have had something to do with the modern French name of the game. It is not unlikely that the first statement, asserting the onomatopoetic origin of the word *trictrac*, is that found in the following passage from the "Récherches de la France" (1560, VIII, p. 671) of Pasquier: "Il ne faut pas obmettre nostre jeu de *tric* et *trac;* car, s'il nous plaist considerer le son que rapportent les dez estans jettez dans le tablier, il n'est autre que le *tric* et *trac;*" but this implies the previous use of the word in its literal sense. Nor is the meaning of "noise" or "confusion," pure and simple, as an interpretation of the word *trictrac* uncommon. Molière says in his comedy of "L'Etourdi" (1658, iv, 5):

> Puis, outre tout cela, vous faisiez sous la table
> Un bruit, un *triquetrac* de pieds insupportable.

The phrase, "Il alloit son beau pas *trictrac*," credited, as we have said, either rightly or wrongly, to Villon, the XVth century poet, is another instance. We also find the same signification in Italian at an early date. The dictionary of Tommaseo so explains it, and presents us with the differing forms *tric trac*, *trich trach* and *tricche tracche*, but states that the two latter forms are provincially applied to an irresolute person (*chi non conclude mai nulla*); while Alessandro Piccolomini (1508-1578), in his manual of advice as to the proper conduct of young ladies in love, styled "La Raffaella, ovvero della creanza delle donne" (Venezia 1574), says of certain persons that they "vanno per la strada con una certa furia, con un *trich trach* di pianellette, che par ch'elle abbiano il diavolo fra le gambe." There is an old Italian conversational adage, now or never used, which was applied to persons of undecided character: "Siamo sempre sul *tricche tracche*, e non si sa che partito prendere." On the other hand, the valuable "Supplemento a'vocabolarj italiani" (1857) of Gherardini treats us to a passage in which several games are enumerated: "Abbiasi la cricca, li sbirri.... il flusso, ed il trentuno, le donne, il *tricchetracche* o il dormiesti" drawn from the humorous production, "Capitolo del gioco della primiera, co'l commento di messer Pietropaulo da San Chirico" (Roma 1526), the real authorship of which is uncertain. In citing this, Gherardini condemns the Italian orthography *tric-trac*, styling it "pessima lessigrafia."

The recent "Diccionario etymologico da lingua Portugueza," by Adolpho Coelho, has *triquetraque* in a new sense; explaining it first as "backgammon" (*o jogo do gamão*), he afterwards says that an old signification of the word was what the Americans call "squib" or "fire-cracker." This meaning occurs likewise in Spanish. The lexicon of Delfin Donadiu y Puignau—a work entering under each vocable the Catalan form—first gives the literal meaning of *triquetraque* (or *trichtrach*, as written in Catalan) as a noise like that of repeated irregular blows, as well as the blows themselves ("ruido como de golpes repetidos y desordenados, ó los mismos golpes"), and then follows it with the secondary sense of "fire-cracker," describing that article fully: "Papel con pólvora, liado y atado en varios dobleces, de cada uno de los cuales resulta un tirillo, pegándole fuego por la mecha que tiene en uno de sus extremos" (but in Catalan this has another name). There is a Spanish phrase derived from the expression of suddenness of sound—*a cada triquitraque* ("at every moment"). The lexicographical work mentioned does not cite the word as having the signification of "*backgammon.*"

As to *tictac*, Littré explains this to be an onomatopoetic expression for a snapping noise resulting from a regulated movement, citing the phrase, "Le *tictac* du moulin" and the following quotation from the "Baron d'Albikir" of Corneille (iii. 5): "Sans cesse auprès de vous le coeur me fait *tictac*." Scheler, treating *trictrac* as a "mot de fantasie," regards *tictac* as a more ancient form, and follows this assertion with the usual explanation, "onomatopée tirée du bruit que font les dés lancés sur le damier." But Littré has nothing to say in regard to *tictac* as a game. Whether it be a corrupt abbreviation of *trictrac*, or whether it be older than that word, it is certain that it was used to express backgammon, or a form of it, in many languages — in some even more frequently than its longer congener. This was the case especially in Dutch. The orthography differs, as does that of its variant, so that we have *ticktack*, *tiktak* and, in Portuguese, *tiquetaque*. The Century dictionary looks upon *tick-tack* as the legitimate English form, and adds "hence by variation *trick-track*." In general, *tictac* and *trictrac* are to be regarded as having, so far as backgammon is concerned, the same signification.

Of varieties of the game other than *trictrac* at present played in France, one of the most notable is that called the (jeu de) *toute-table*, equivalent to our most common and oldest existing English form of backgammon proper, which in German, in later treatises, is known as *gammon*. This, as the reader will remember, is believed to be the table-game appearing in King Alfonso's list as *todas tablas*. For some reason it has been for many centuries the favorite variety in all English lands. A differing sort, entitled *revertier*, is also a wide-spread variety. In the XVIIth century "Compleat Gamester" it is styled *verquere*, and is there said to be "originally of Dutch extraction, and one of the most noted diversions among the Hollanders." The former German title was *verkehren*, but in modern treatises the French name is employed. There is in the French a second name, now generally disused, *reverquier*, probably an echo-word from the German *verkehren*. In Holland the name is *verkeer*. As to the Scandinavian languages, the German term, or a corruption of it, is used in all the older manuals, but *forkæring* occurs in Danish. The name of one French variety, *garanguet*, is found, separately entered, in no French dictionary, etymological or otherwise. The word has been transferred to German by later writers on games. The simple game of *les dames rabbatues* has long been known in England, occurring not only in the "Compleat Gamester," but even in Hyde (II, pp. 36-37). It, or some form nearly identical, seems to have been likewise known in France in old times as *renette*, the early dictionary of Cotgrave (1611) translating it "a game like doublets or queen's game." Hyde considers that the word is properly *reinette*, since Salmasius makes note of a game which he calls "*reginula* vulgo *regineta*."

The lexicographers who treat the word *jacquet* (rarely written *jaquet*) unite in deriving it as a diminutive from the proper noun Jacques, in its meaning of "lackey" (French *laquais*), from which comes likewise the English "jockey" with a similar sense. They do not however assert, although they imply it, that in the meaning of a "jeu analogue de trictrac," as Hatzfeld and Darmesteter define it, its etymological origin is the same. The word has been introduced into Italian as *giacchetto*. It would seem that it must have a connection with the Spanish *chaquete* (backgammon) alluded to here-

after, the orthography of which is sometimes given in the dictionaries as *jaquet*, which according to Donadiu y Puignau is the Catalan form; both are used by Brunet y Bellet (see in "El ajadrez," pp. 143, 254), but that may arise from the fact that the learned author is a Catalan. It is possible that the word, and the game which it represents, may go much further back in Spanish. In the list of games treated by King Alfonso, under the general heading of "tables," there is one variety styled *laquet*. The list is accessible only in the pages of Van der Linde, in which there is at least one slight error. Why may not *laquet* be an erroneous transcription of an old form representing *chaquete* or *jaquet?* No Spanish etymologist suggests any etymology for *chaquete*. Another of the different kinds of *trictrac* mentioned by Moulidars is the "jeu de toc." This may or may not be the same as *toccadiglio*. Scheler gives the word *toc* as a verbal substantive from *toquer*, an older form of *toucher*. Littré cites *toc* as an "onomatopée d'un bruit, d'un choc sourd," and shows that it is used, as a reduplication, *toc toc*, by Perrault, Madame de Genlis and others, in an effort to express repetition of sound.

There is, as the reader will already have perceived, much confusion in the names given to the many varieties of backgammon. Nor is a variety in one language always represented by the proper and equivalent name in another. With his usual acumen Hyde (II, p. 35) notices this fact when he remarks: "sed iste non est unus idemque lusus apud omnes gentes;" and even finds divergencies in different parts of the same country, saying that "apud nos nomen eundem lusum notat secundum diversas Angliæ provincias rerum denominationes aliquantulùm variantes."

A whole chapter might be written on the French technical terms used in playing *trictrac*. Of *jan* we have already said something. It has been transferred to other languages, although sometimes with a somewhat different signification. It is remarkable that the "Compleat Gamester," early in the XVIIIth century, in its account of "Verquere," which represents the French variety of backgammon, *revertier*, has the technical word "John," which is even used as a verb, "to john" one's opponent, while in its notice of the "grand tricktrack" game it talks of "Gens de retour, or Back-Game." Whether these citations throw any light on the origin or general use of *jan* is questionable; they may merely result, the first from a desire to anglicise the word, or both that and the second from ignorance of French orthography. The late French dictionary of Hatzfeld and Darmesteter says that the etymology of *jan* is uncertain, but that it is "peut-être du nom propre Jean"—abandoning the Janus hypothesis as evidently of no value. *Jan* occurs as early as the time of Rabelais (d. 1553), for he says: "L'on dict que le *jan* en vault deux." The definition of the lexicographers just cited is a "coup par lequel un joueur perd des points, ou en fait perdre à l'autre," which is concise enough. The etymologist Scheler omits the word. Littré enumerates all the *jans* and *contrejans*, (1-10), as we have seen, and then notes the broader technical meaning of the word: "Par extension, on a donné le nom de *jan* aux parties de *trictrac* où ces *jans* ont lieu: on dit 'le petit jan,' 'le grand jan,' 'le jan de retour,' pour la première partie [of the tables], la seconde, et enfin la première de l'adversaire." The best French-English lexicon, that of Fleming and Tibbins, translates *jan* by itself, thus showing that the term must have been in use in Eng-

land, and renders *petit jan* by "left hand table," *grand jan* by "right hand table" and *jan de retour* by "outer table." No dictionary endeavors to explain the derivation of *Mézéas* (*méséas*) in the name of the *jan de mézéas*. The fact that it is frequently written with a capital M would seem to indicate that it is a proper name; but the termination *-as* (meaning "*ace*") leads us to believe that it is a compound, and the definition of the term apparently supports this idea: Le jan de méséas "a lieu quand, au début d'une partie, on a pris son coin de repos, sans avoir aucune autre dame abattue dans tout son jeu, et *quand on amène ensuite un ou deux as.*" Perhaps it is a corruption of "le jan d'*ambesas*," signifying the "jan of two aces." *Talon* is the ordinary French word for "heel" or "heel-piece;" hence it signifies the extreme point of the board. The term *bredouille*, is generally confined to *trictrac*. It has been formed from the verb *bredouiller*, to "pronounce rapidly," to "sputter." It is defined by Littré thus: "Marque indiquant qu'on a pris de suite tous les points qui forment un trou ou tous les trous qui font la partie, sans que l'adversaire ait marqué ou des points ou des trous. La *bredouille* des points se marque avec un double jeton, quand l'adversaire a pris quelques trous au commençant de la partie. 2° l'avantage qui en resulte, qui est que les trous ou la partie sont gagnés doubles." The following phrases are cited: *Petite, grande bredouille; avoir la bredouille; être en bredouille; perdre la partie bredouille.* Cotgrave renders *bredouille* into English as "lurch." As to the term *plein* at *trictrac*, Littré defines the phrase "faire son plein" as signifying *couvrir de deux dames les six fleches d'une des tables*, and cites "Le joueur" (I. 10) of Regnard: "Et quand mon *plein* est fait, gardant mes avantages." Other phrases are: "conserver son plein," "tenir son plein," "rompre son plein."

We have enumerated elsewhere (see p. 180) the modern French forms of the names given to the dice doublets. From the old French forms the English names are derived, as well as those in some other tongues. This seems to indicate a peculiar and long prevalent taste for dice-games in the Gallic race. *Ambes as* is XIIth century French, remotely from the Greek ἄμφω and directly from the Latin *ambo* (old French *ambe*, even in its earliest age a term of play)—*ambo* meaning "two," "both," "double," "dual." In English the term likewise occurs in the XIIth century. We have it in the old production, "The Harrowing of Hell" (1300) in the lines:

> Still be thou, Sathanas!
> The ys fallen *ambes aas.*

The lexicographer and grammarian, Robert Sherwood, has in 1650 "to cast *ambes ace;*" and the philosopher Hobbes, a contemporary of Sherwood, has (1656) "casting *ambs-ace.*" Another word for "double ace" is *beset* (sometimes *bezet*, and not unusually *besas*), which Littré defines as "deux as amenés d'un coup de dés." Its etymology is *bis* (two) and *as*, *bis* being a Latin corrupt form of *duis* (twice). *Ternes*, generally in the plural, is from the Latin *ternus* (triple). It occurs in a poet as early as Villon:

> Abusé m'a et faict entendre
> D'ambesas que ce fussent *ternes.*

The word is used (*terna*) both in Spanish and Provençal. Double fours in French is *carme*, formerly written in the plural *carmes*, and still so cited in the dictionary of the French academy. It is a corruption of *carnes*, used

in the time of Ménage (1613-1692), and is from the Latin *quaternus* ("by fours," from the Latin *quatuor*). *Quine*, according to Littré, is a *trictrac* term signifying a "coup de dés qui amène deux cinq." It is as old as the XIIth century, occurring in the "Brut" (see the present volume, p. 76), a French poem of that period:

> Et deux et deux giettant es *carnes*
> Et *ambes as* et le tiers *ternes*,
> A la foiée giettant *quines*
> Et *sennes*; et en font grant signes . . . .

a passage of interest from the number of dice-terms employed. Very peculiar is the term for double sixes, *sannes* (pronounced in one syllable *san*, but written also *sonnes* and *sonnez*). It is from the Latin *seni*, an adjective meaning "six by six," "which are six." It is employed in an ingenious passage of "La fille capitaine" (l. 9), a poem by Antoine Jacob called Montfleury (1640-1685):

> . . . . . De ces gueux fainéants,
> Dont le sort est écrit sur les os d'un cornet
> Dont les commandeurs sont les *carnes* et les *sannes*
> Et qui font chez Fridor toutes leurs caravanes.

It is needless to say that "les os d'un cornet" are the dice; Fridor was the proprietor of a "maison de jeu" at Paris about 1671. It is interesting to compare with these the Italian names of the doublets. They are *ambassi* (more modern, *bambini*); *duini* (*duetti*); *terni; quaderni; quini* (singular sometimes *china*); and *sena* (also *dodici*).

In the Iberian peninsula the story of tables-backgammon begins with the extraordinary codex, still preserved in the Escurial near Madrid, which was compiled at the instance of the Spanish king Alfonso X, during the latter half of the XIIIth century. This still partly inedited manuscript treats of chess, of pure dice-games, of "tables" in its many varieties, of some abnormal table-games, and, if we may believe Van der Linde ("Quellenstudien," pp. 277-8), also of several different forms of the morris game. The dozen or more various sorts of "tables" form the third book, or division, of this comprehensive treatise. Many of these diverse kinds of backgammon have come down to our own times, and not a few of them have even preserved the names given to them in that early age. Indeed, if we wish to assure ourselves of the vitality of human amusements, we have but to compare the later manuals of games "played within the tables," with this treatise of Alfonso, and with such codices as that "De ludis tabularum" now in the British Museum, which was composed less than a hundred years after the work of the Spanish monarch, and which we have printed at length in preceding pages. We must repeat that our knowledge of every portion of the old manuscript so long and so carefully guarded in the Escurial library, except of its early sections relating to chess, is very slight indeed. A transcript of the unknown portions is, of course, essential to a knowledge of our game in old Spain. Nor have we been able to obtain information much more full in regard to the later practice of the game in the peninsula. There may possibly be modern Spanish manuals of games, such as exist in great numbers in other lands, in which they are known under the title of "Académies des jeux" and the like; but we have been unable to discover any publication of this class

in the Castilian tongue. Dictionaries and cyclopedias have been our only sources; and these are, naturally, of the most unsatisfactory character.[153]

We find in Spanish two words representing the French *trictrac* and the English backgammon. These are *tablas reales* and *chaquete*. In some of the lexicons, if we search for the former term, we are told that it is "a game similar to *chaquete;*" if we look for the latter, we are informed that it is "a game resembling *tablas reales*." The former denomination is, of course, the *tabulæ* of the early middle ages, still keeping its plural form, and with the addition of the adjective *reales*, which may signify either that it was considered to be a court game *par excellence*, or that it was the principal, most important and best of the varieties of backgammon, just as the French speak, with a similar significance, of "le grand *trictrac*." The exact origin and meaning of the other name (*chaquete*) is, as has been hinted, at present very much of a puzzle. In the province of Catalonia, especially noted for its early literature having reference to games, *chaquete* becomes *jaquet*, reminding us of the French *jacquet;* while among the varieties of tables enumerated by Alfonso we have *laquet*, in which the initial letter may or may not be, in Van der Linde's list, a misprint for *j* or *ch*. But this suggestion can scarcely be regarded as assuming even the doubtful dignity of a surmise, and can be verified only by an examination of the manuscript. In addition to the repetitions, in which we have already indulged, we must again state that in Spanish no congener of *trictrac* is employed as the title of a game. The word *triquitraque* signifies in Spain either a certain kind of noise, or a "firecracker" (French, *pétard*). In both meanings this word occurs in modern Spanish literature. Thus José Francisco de la Isla, a noted Jesuit miscellaneous prose writer (1703-1781), speaks of "esos retruecanilloses, ese paloteo de voces, y ese *triquitraque* de palabras con que usted propone casi todos los asuntos des sus sermones es cosa que me embelesa." In the other sense, we find it in the works of the fertile and popular comic and dramatic poet, Manuel Breton de los Herreros (1796-1873), as is shown by these lines:

> Si ya no ha reventado
> Lo mismo que un *triquetraque*,
> No es suya la culpa; no,
> Porque le tiene un coraje
> A la vida....

From the huge "Diccionario enciclopedico Hispano-americano," issued in late years at Barcelona, we take this definition of *chaquete*: "Especie de juego de tablas reales en el cual se van pasando alrededor todas las piezas por las casas desocupadas, y el que mas presto las reduce al extremo del lado contrario y las saca, gana el juego." This is followed by a single citation taken from the poet and essayist, Gaspar Melchior de Jovellanos (1744-1811):

[153] At this point of our writing we learn that the vast collection of chess works belonging to Mr. White of Cleveland (Ohio), to which allusion has so often been made, includes careful copies of all the known mediæval MSS relating to the Indian game — among them the famous one in the Escurial. These transcripts embrace also the sections treating of other table-games than chess, whenever such occur. Mr. White displays a liberality not always exhibited by book-owners in placing his copies, which must often have been obtained under great difficulties, at the service of investigators on both sides of the Atlantic. Availing ourselves of this generosity we may be able, in the errata-supplement attached to this volume, to disperse some of the clouds which have hitherto obscured those chapters of the Castilian king's codex having to do with the games of morris and tables.

".... con encuadernacion de libros, siesta, *chaquete*.... y una partida de baciga o malilla, tiene usted el compendio de la vida interior y esterior que hago, etc." The same encyclopedic work gives this description of the game of *chaquete*, which, it will be seen, is too brief to be of much interest; but such as it is, we copy it: "A este juego se juega con dos dados, y según los puntos que se marquen al tirar los, se colocan quince tantos ó damas en varias cassillas ó puntos marcados en el tablero especial de este juego. Para jugar al *chaquete* es preciso que cada jugador tenga quince damas ó peones, como se les quiera llamar, tres tantos y dos fichas que son las señales que se ponen en cada punto, segun los que se ganen. El *chaquete* se juega entre dos personas: al empezar el juego se hacen dos ó tres montones con las damas que se colocan en la primera casilla o flecha del *chaquete;* á esto se le da el nombre de monte ó fondo. No hay regla que fije la cabecera, y es indiferente que el monte ó fondo de damas se coloque en uno ú otro lado. Para jugar con orden es preciso, si al principio se empareja, jugar dos damas del monte y colocarlas en el as, que es la flecha sobre la que estan amontonadas las damas. Se puede jugar todo de una vez colocando una sola dama en la segunda flecha. Lo mismo sucede en las demás combinaciones, que pueden verificarse o jugarse á la vez, si se quiere exceptuando, no obstante, los numeros cinco y seis, que deben jugarse precisamente cuando salen en la primera jugada, porque las reglas del juego no permiten que quede una dama sola en la casilla llamada de reposo. De la habilidad, ó mejor, de la prudencia del jugador, depende poner dos damas juntas en la flecha en que esta el monte de las damas, que por lo regular es la primera. Se pasa luego á la casilla del reposo, la cual se efectua colocando en él juntas dos damas, algunas veces en las de su lado cuando lo exigen las lances del juego. En cuanto se tiran los dados, y según las puntas que se hayan sacado, debe verse la ganancia ó pérdida que se haya hecho antes de tocar las damas, porque es regla del juego que dama tocada dama jugada, á menos que la dama ó peón tocado no pueda jugarse, caso que ocurre cuando un jugador puede colocarse en una casilla de esquina no ocupada, de donde otra dama no podría entrar ni salir sola ó bien que tropiece con el juego del contrario, antes de que se le haya abierto brecha. Según las reglas del *chaquete*, cuando se ganan dos puntos deben marcarse en el extremo delantero de la flecha segunda; los cuatro puntos delante de la flecha cuarta; los seis puntos en la línea de separación; los ocho puntos al otro lado del la linea de separacion delante de la flecha seis; los diez puntos se marcan en la última linea; los doce que constituyen la partida doble se marcan con una ficha. El que tira los dados tiene siempre el derecho de marcar el punto que gana antes que su contrario señale el que pierde. Hay que advertir también que, cuando uno de los jugadores se ha apoderado de una de las casillas de esquina y el contrario no lo ha efectuado aún en la suya, cada vez que se tiran los dados vale cuatro ó seis puntos, si con dos damas se combate el rincón vacio del adversario, es decir, seis por doble y cuatro por sencillo. Según el 'Diccionario de la lengua Castellana' por la Real academia española, 'el antico juego llamado de *tablas reales* era muy parecido al moderno *chaquete*.'"

The description here given is too obscure, and is characterised by too many omissions of essential features, to make a translation of it either feasible or useful. Its rule that two men must be placed simultaneously on the

"corner of repose" (the extreme point in each player's table) seems to ally it with the French *trictrac*, but, on the other hand, many important characteristics of that principal French variety are not mentioned by the evidently ignorant Spanish compiler. It would be satisfactory to find that there was a real relationship — as well as a resemblance of name — between *chaquete* and the French *jacquet*, but the reader, on examining the few lines which we have devoted to the latter (p. 182), will notice that no mention is made in the Spanish account of the *avant-courier*, or single piece sent forward in the French game to the final board. Nor are we told, either by the writer cited, or in any other accessible publication, what the real difference is between *tablas reales* and *chaquete*, the dictionaries even, as we have stated, only vaguely informing us that they resemble each other. It is not at all impossible that at present in Spain they are two names for one and the same thing. As to the Spanish dictionaries, they are all worse than useless so far as our purpose is concerned. The most noted one, that of the Spanish academy, has for the most part been superseded by newer works. But the best of its successors, the "Diccionario de la lengua castellana" of Donadiu y Puignau does little more than to copy the very brief description of his predecessor (under *chaquete*): "Especie de juego de *tablas reales*, en el cual se van pasando alrededor todas las piezas por las casas desocupadas, y el que más presto las reduce al extremo del lado contrario y las saca, gana el juego" — just as it has likewise been reproduced, as a definition, by the compiler of the "Diccionario enciclopedico." Donadiu y Puignau adds nothing to this except to give the corresponding Catalan form as *jaquet*. Of *chaquete* he suggests an etymology, which certainly has a dubious look; he says that it is derived from the old-French *eschac*, signifying "booty" (*bútin*), "capture" or "prey" (*presa*), and so "game" (*juego*)—a derivation which has been copied and tacitly endorsed by other Spanish compilers. The early French word he cites has to do with our Germanic friend, which we treated some pages back, from which, in its Old High German form (*scâhhâri*), is descended the modern German vocable *schächer* ("robber"), and which has been used in attempting to ascribe to chess a European origin. Under *triquitraque* the same lexicographer has the two usual meanings, telling us that in the sense of a repeated noise the Catalan orthography is *trichtrach*, while for "cracker" or "squib" it employs quite another term (*carretilla*, *piule*). The French-Spanish dictionary of Salvà (1876, 6th ed.), the compiler of which was a scholar of high reputation, translates "trictrac" by *chaquete*, and "revertier" as *juego de chaquete*, while the French "jacquet" is defined as *juego de tablas reales* — than which nothing could be more indefinite. Other definitions relating to backgammon are; "jan," *las dos tablas del juego del chaquete o de tablas reales*; "faire sa jan de retour," *volver a su proprio juego, despues de haber pasado todas sus damas al juego del contrario;* "Contre jan," *contraenvite, llamada falsa en algunos juegos.* These explanations are all inexact, to say the least. The following are more correct, and relate to the names of the doublets: "ambesas," *ases, voz que usan los jugadores de chaquete cuando sale el as en dos dados, o en los tres;* "ternes," *ternas o treses, parejas de tres puntos en el juego de dados;* "carmes," *cuadernas o cuatros, las parejas de cuatro en el juego de tablas o del chaquete;* "quine," *quina, pareja de cinco en el juego del chaquete.* We find no rendering of the French "sannes" (double sixes). It is worth noting that the Spanish and Italian words

for "die" (*dado*) are identical, and that *pareja*, in the former tongue, signifies, "doublet."

As to Portugal the lack of information is still greater than in the case of its peninsular companion, and we are obliged to depend almost wholly upon the makers of dictionaries. We discover from them that there are four expressions used as names of games played on the backgammon board: 1. [jogo de] *tabulas;* 2. *tiquetaque;* 3. [jogo do] *gamão;* and 4. *tocadilho.* In regard to the first we learn that the orthography of this derivative of the Latin *tabula* vacillates (in the singular) between *tabola, tabula* and *taboa. Tabola* is also given with the signification of "pawn" or "man;" while Adolpho Coelho's "Diccionario etymologico da lingua portugueza" states that it not only has this meaning (*peça redonda para o jogo de gamão*) but also signifies the board (*e outros de taboleiro*). *Tiquetaque* is said by the "Century dictionary" to be the Portuguese for backgammon or tricktrack, and is indeed found in most of the Portuguese vocabularies in that sense. Coelho does not cite this form, but in his definition of *tocadilho* he refers to *triquetraque* (*jogo de tabulas similhante ao triquetraque*), but when you look up his rubric of *triquetraque*, you can discover no mention of it as the name of a game, but only as a "fogo de artificio que da estalos"—evidently the "fire-cracker." Coelho declares that it is an ancient term. The most interesting of the denominations in our list is, however, *gamão,* the more interesting that its origin seems to be still a mystery. It is also, we believe, the most common of the Portuguese terms. Coelho speaks of "o jogo do gamão," and of "o taboleiro de jogo do gamão;" and tells us that it is the same as the Spanish *triquitraque* (which, as we have already learned, does not to seem to be known to Spanish lexicography as the name of a game) and the French *trictrac* or *triquetrac.* Elsewhere he defines *gamão* as a "jogo de azar e calcúlo," adding that it likewise means "o taboleiro [board] sobre que se joga." Other Portuguese dictionaries describe *gamão* as *sbaraglino* (an Italian name for a variety of backgammon); one renders the word *trictrac* as *jogo de tabolas,* gamão; and the Italian *sbaraglio* (of which we shall hear soon) is translated by *gamão de tres dados.* Whether *gamão* be the English "gammon;" which it resembles in pronunciation—received into the language possibly through the French—it is altogether impossible to decide except after more thorough investigation. Our fourth term, *tocadilho* (which, as we have observed, does not seem to be Spanish), is found in the vocabulary of Coelho, as well as in those of other lexicographers, but without any suggested etymology. In one dictionary it is rendered by the Italian *tavola reale.* In an English and Portuguese dictionary by Lacerda (1866), our "trictrac" is rendered by *jogo de tabulas,* and our "backgammon" by *gamão;* but in the Portuguese-English part (1871) of the same work we have *jogo das tabulas* interpreted as "the game called tables or draughts"—an ordinary instance of lexicological fallibility. All this is very meagre. There ought (as we have said in regard to Spain) to be some treatise on games, published either in the mother country or in Brazil, which would enhance our scanty information, but we have failed to find any which presents any features of much value. The fourth edition of an anonymous "Manual dos jogos" was indeed issued at Lisbon in one of the last years of the century just closed. It is printed in large type, treats 46 games of cards; 14 "jogos differentes," among them the usual table games (except morris); 4 "jogos de sport;" and a multitude of social or draw-

ing-room amusements.[154] To each game are assigned certain very brief numbered paragraphs. Thus, billiards is taught in 25 such paragraphs, the longest extending to fewer than six lines; draughts is presented in 17 paragraphs; and chess in 34, that is in fewer than 88 of the large-type lines. *Gamão* (trictrac) has also its place (pp. 150-153), embracing 26 numbered paragraphs, the longest of 8 lines. A few unimportant illustrations adorn the volume, one being a vignette on the cover title-page, repeated on p. 139, representing the *assalto* board, that is the English fox-and-geese board having the upper arm of the cross transformed into a fortress; while others exhibit the method of laying out a croquet field (p. 173) and a tennis court (p. 189).

In treating all the table-games there is a general lack of precision, which can only arise from lack of knowledge. In draughts (*damas*), for instance, we are told that "ordinarily the men (*peões*) are placed on the white squares" but that "this, however, is of no importance since they may be placed indifferently on those, or on the black ones"—without any allusion to the fact that the squares must be those in the diagonal lines. Nor is either the number of squares or the number of men necessary to the game stated, the compiler having, perhaps, heard vaguely of "Polish draughts" and not wishing to betray, unnecessarily, his ignorance. At the end of some of the sections, forming the final rule or paragraph, is a general apology declaring that the game under notice is of such a complicated character that it is impossible to treat it in detail. In reference to chess (*xadrez*) we are told (pp. 162-166) that the men are called *peão* (plural, *peões*); and the pieces *rei*, *rainha*, *roque* (plural, *roques*), *cavallo* (plural, *cavallos*) and *delphin* (plural, *delphins*). By the 22d rule we are advised that "when a king is separated from the hostile king by only a single square it is said to be in opposition" (*quando um rei está unicamente separado do rei inimigo por uma casa, diz-se em opposição*). A similar dubious definition is that given in the 25th paragraph: "To sacrifice a piece (*peça*) to the enemy in order to secure a more open (*mais desafogada*) position is to play a gambit (*jogar um gambito*)." Castling, according to the meaning given to it in rule 27, is a matter of great simplicity: "To play two pieces at once is called castling (*chama-se rocar*)." We enumerate these naïve definitions merely to give an idea of the character of the work. We find cited only a few technical chess terms. Among them are: *cheque ao rei; cheque a descoberto; cheque dobrado; cheque perpetuo; mate abafado.*

And now we come to *gamão*, which is subdivided into 26 brief paragraphs. We note, as we run our eye over the three pages, that the men are called *damas*; and the points to be counted *pontos*. The 15 *damas* of one player are white, those of his opponent either black or green. The game requires likewise 2 dice (*dados*), three markers (*tentos*) and two pegs, (*pregos*, in French *fiches*) of bone or ivory. The dice are placed in a *copo de couro* (literally "cup of leather"). The men, at the beginning of the

[154] The title of the book in full is: "Manual dos jogos — jogos de Cartas pequenos jogos de sala e jogos diversos — 4ª edição Interamente refundida e augmentada com todos os jogos modernos usados nos clubs e na boa sociedade taes como Bluff, Whist, Boston, Baccarat, Bésique, Piquet, Lawn-tennis, Foot-ball, Croquet, Cricket, etc., etc. Lisboa — 1899 editor — Arnaldo Bordado, 42 Rua da Victoria — 1° " — 8° pp. 262. — which we give with its peculiar punctuation.

game, are piled in three heaps on the first point (here *flecha*, from the French) marked on the backgammon-board (*gamão*). The white men are considered to be the "pieces of honor" (*damas de honor*). *Casar* means to establish a *casa*, that is to make a point safe by "doubling" a man on it; *az* (plural, *azes*) is ace; *lanço* is a "move;" *componho* corresponds to the French *j'adoube* at chess. The author's final paragraph reads thus: "there are many and good treatises on the game of backgammon. They are all, moreover, books containing abundant matter (*livros de copiosa materia*), some of them exceeding, in the number of their pages, the present manual. Amateurs will consult those works." In the preceding paragraph (25th) he had given his customary apologetical utterance about the deficiencies of his book: "N'um pequeno resumo de jógos como o nosso, comprehende-se a impossibilidade que ha em desenvolver aquelles que, como o *gamão*, obedecem a complicadissimas regras."

It would be difficult for the tyro, even with the closest study, to learn to play the game by the sole aid of the meagre instructions thus given. Nor can one easily decide what variety of the game is here described, but it seems to correspond more nearly to the ordinary French *trictrac* than to any other. We are first informed that each player has "15 men which he disposes artistically on the points indicated in the board" (*quinze damas, as dispõe artisticamente sobre os pontos marcados no taboleiro*), and then that the game is begun by entering the 15 men, in 2 or 3 piles, on the first point designed on the board (*gamão*). Rule 12 tells us that no isolated or single man can be placed on the "point of repose" (*casa de descanço*, which is immediately afterwards styled *casa de repouso*), and the inhibition is repeated, in another form, by the statement that a *casa* can be made on that point by placing on it, conjointly, two men (*collocando n'ella, conjunctamente, duas damas*). The rule for reckoning the minor points, as well as the game-points, are virtually those which we find laid down in the treatise of Moulidars for *trictrac*. If we may draw any conclusion from this work it is that the modern Portuguese game is that most taught and practised in France. The only name given in the "Manual" to backgammon is *gamão*.

If we regard the identity of the Roman *duodecim scripta* with nard-tables-backgammon, or with some form of it, as not yet determined, then we must assume that the oldest historical monuments connected with the history of our game in the Italic peninsula are those remarkable manuscripts, of which the earliest extant texts are to be found in Florence and Rome, and which treat of what has been characterised as the triad of mediæval diversions—the games of chess, morris and tables. These ancient codices, in their existing shape, all date from a period between the XIVth and the XVIth centuries. They were originally written in Latin, and, therefore, it is not impossible that there may have been texts, now lost, going back to a somewhat earlier date. The portions relating to the morris game and to tables have not been, so far as is known to us, subjected to an accurate comparison with the Alfonsine MS, and hence we can form no trustworthy judgment of the relations they may, or may not bear to the Spanish text. We only know that certain methods of playing tables are indicated by the same, or very similar names, in both. That Latin is the language of the early North-Italian documents and Spanish of that of Alfonso might indicate the greater age of the former, but this difference may well be owing to other

circumstances than age. The development of vernacular literatures in both lands was nearly contemporaneous. While the wise Alfonso, to whom the Escurial MS owes its being, was writing his famous code and his chronicle at Seville, the emperor of the Holy Roman empire, Frederick II, was inditing Italian verses at Palermo, and Guido Guinicelli was composing the earliest sonnets, canzoni and ballate at Bologna — works which made him, in Dante's opinion,

> . . . . . il padre
> Mio e degli altri miei miglior, che mai
> Rime d'amore usar dolci e leggiadre.

But Alfonso "first made the Castilian a national language," as the chief historian of Spanish letters tells us — and, singularly enough, by the same means employed by Luther, long afterwards, to give vitality to the German, namely by translating the Bible into it — and would naturally see that his book of games, like nearly everything else with which he had to do, was in the vulgar speech. Political relations did not exist between North Italy and Spain until almost three centuries later, when, under Charles V, they became intimate enough; for the struggles between the other Spanish Alfonsos, Alfonso V and VI of Arragon, and the republic of Genoa were mainly confined to the sea, although the latter monarch, after the disastrous naval battle off Ponza in 1435, was, for a brief period, a prisoner-guest in the hands of the last Visconti duke of Milan, to whose custody he had been consigned by the victorious Genoese. No doubt there was, in those days, a fairly close ecclesiastical connection between the two prominent Latin nationalities, so that, through the convents, or through various channels meeting each other at Rome, an author of any production in one country, would be pretty apt to hear of and to get sight of any preceding work on his theme written in the other. It is not unlikely, however, that the strongest link uniting the two peninsulas, just at the time in which we are interested, would be the great university of Bologna, which was at its highest point of fame and frequency between Irnerius in the XIIth century and Mondino in the XIVth; one of its earliest foundations — still to be seen — is the "Collegio di Spagna," anciently thronged with students from beyond the Pyrenees. Very notable certainly is the similarity of the Spanish and Italian MSS, both principally devoted as they are to three amusements, chess, morris, tables. Did the authors of both independently select these three subjects, because in both lands they were the most notable table-games? Did those of Italy imitate the Spanish production, or did the Castilian monarch get the idea of his compilation from or through Rome? Or did both follow in the path of earlier compilers? In one respect they are understood to differ: — the Italians pay no heed to games of pure chance, in which dice only are used without board or men, while a certain number of such games appear to be described in the Escurial codex. Was this because the North-Italian compilations were for use in school and cloister, and the other was prepared for the diversion of a court? The testimony of age, proving what it may, so far as we are now in a position to gather and appreciate it, is assuredly in favor of Spain. We know that the compilation which bears the name of Alfonso was completed before 1285; we cannot, taking the most favourable view, ascribe so high a date, by at least a half century, to any of the venerable works which we are about to describe. But, as has

been said by others, there may have been older texts, which have disappeared.

The original and oldest forms of these works are to be found chiefly in three collections, namely, the great Victor Emanuel or government library at Rome, in the library belonging to Prince Barberini in the same city, and in the National library — the largest in Italy — at Florence. It is possible, though not probable, that one or two of these codices go back to the XIVth century, but the others, as we have just said, are to be referred to the XVth and XVIth. Though not all contain positions in chess, merelles and backgammon, most of them include problems in all three, generally with an explanatory note attached to each, showing how it is to be played and resolved. The chess problems always come first, are much the most numerous, and are followed in varying order by those at morris or tables. It is in our own times that attention was first called to the texts in Italy — a little subsequent to the middle of the XIXth century — after they had, for a long while, vanished from the knowledge of the general public — hidden away, in the unsatisfactorily catalogued MSS rooms of the vast Italian book-collections we have mentioned, as securely as if they had been sunk to the bottom of the river Lethe. For subject-lists of collections of codices and of archives are almost non-existent on the continent of Europe, and in ordinary alphabetical author-catalogues, anonymous and pseudonymous productions, if entered at all, are generally so entered as to be almost *introuvables*, unless the searcher be not only an expert, but an inspired expert. The story of their refinding, which was given to the public by the London *Illustrated News* in 1854,[155] reminds one of the rediscovery by Pierre de Nolhac of the precious Petrarch autograph MSS, belonging, in the XVIth century, to the Fulvio Orsini collection, but which, for several generations, had been concealed from human ken, their very existence forgotten, in the rarely-opened presses of the Vatican treasure-house. That event was almost like the reappearance of the Italian poet himself, pen in hand, among the ranks of the living. In the other case, the little world of chess was astounded to learn what stores of the chess wisdom of our ancestors had been almost unwittingly preserved for our delectation. So far as their chess contents are concerned the newly-

[155] The announcement of the discovery of these MSS was made in the London *Illustrated News* (the chess-column of which was then edited by Howard Staunton) of July 1, 1854 (page-number 632) in an article entitled "Remarkable discovery of valuable MSS on chess." The discovery was said to have been made in the two most important libraries of Florence (probably the Maglabecchian and the Palatine, since that time united as the National library) by a signor Fantacci, whose communication was written from the Tuscan ministry of the interior (Ministero dell'interno). The article states that Mr. Fantacci had procured copies of the chief works which he had found, and had sent these transcripts to Mr. Staunton. Then follows a brief list of seven MSS, of which the first four, two on vellum and two on paper, are among those which we have treated in the present section. The first of these is the oldest, "Bonus Socius" — this anonym is here seen for the first time in print — which is said by Mr. Fantacci to be of the latter end of the XIIIth or the beginning of the XIVth century; the other vellum is assigned to the XVth century; the third codex is a Latin paper MS, and the fourth an Italian paper MS, both likewise of the XVth century. The last three MSS consist of an anonymous paper codex of the XVIth century entitled: "L'eleganzia, sottilita e verriti [*sic*] della virtuosissima professione degli scacchi;" an Italian vellum containing a work by Luigi Guicciardini, being a "comparazione del giuoco degli scacchi all'arte militare," without date; and a parchment MS of Greco's "Nobilissimo giuoco de scacchi" with the date of 1621. The account of these MSS is copied word for word into the *Chess Player's Chronicle* (new series II, pp. 220-221), likewise then edited by Mr. Staunton. Short

found MSS have been studied with much care and judgment by Van der Linde and Von der Lasa, but the portions of them which are devoted to the other mediæval games still await an editor. He should not much longer be lacking, for it is easy to understand that no history of tables-backgammon, in its European period, can be written without a previous minute study of all these manuscript sources. In such days as ours, when so many scholars are crowding each other in their efforts to delve among the literary and other treasures of the past, it is rare to find so much unwrought material, on any subject, so easily accessible to the student.

These documents of Italian origin fall into two families or groups, one (believed to be the earlier) having for its compiler a writer who styles himself "Bonus Socius." This signifies literally a "good companion" or "good fellow," but has also been interpreted to mean "teacher," "tutor," "instructor," "docent" — from an alleged mediæval use of the term in universities; but why should it not be regarded as signifying a man fond of company and pleasures — and pastimes, in fact a "boon companion," for "bonus" is "boon." In some of the texts or versions the compiler's or editor's name is given as Nicholas de St. Nicholai, and he is said to be of Lombardy. If "St. Nicholai" or "S. Nicolà" represent his natal place the matter is not thereby much helped, for there are numerous communities so called in Italy — especially in the Southern provinces, where the cult of the patron saint of Bari once greatly prevailed — to say nothing of others in other lands. There seems to be no such locality well or widely known in Lombardy, but there is one just over the border in Venetia. Von der Lasa suggests that the real "Bonus Socius" may have been born in any country, and have lived in Northern Italy as a member of a monastery, which makes the effort to identify his birthplace well nigh a hopeless task. The MS of his work which furnishes the earliest known text is found in the National library at Florence — a handsome vellum codex (B. A. 6 — p.2.-no. 1.); while others, complete or incomplete, in the original, or in French or other renderings, are preserved in the libraries of France (at Paris and Montpellier); of England (at London and in the possession of the Fountaine family, Narford Hall, Swaffham, Norfolk — but see a later page of this section, where it will be noted that this rare and beautiful volume has ceased to be the property of the Fountaines); in cities east of the Rhine (Prague, Munich, Wolfenbüttel); and even in the United States (at Cleveland, Ohio). The last men-

as the article is it is not without blunders, and ultimately gave rise to other misstatements. The titles of the fifth and the sixth MSS are erroneously copied, and we do not vouch for their correctness in the forms in which we have cited them; Mr. Staunton apparently and Van der Linde certainly ("Geschichte" I, pag. 284), in their ignorance of Italian, mistook the word *ministero* for *ministro*, so that the latter plainly speaks of "den wichtigen fund des toskanischen ministers." In the *Illustrated News* of July 22 (pag. 67) the editor, in reply to a supposititious correspondent, says that although the Guicciardini MS is not dated, it is quite easy to ascertain its age approximately, since it is dedicated to the illustrious Cosimo de' Medici who died 1464, not noticing that the list of MSS in his own article states that it was dedicated to Cosimo, the second duke of Florence (duca 2°), who died not in 1464 but in 1574. As Luigi Guicciardini, who was the nephew of the historian, was born in 1523 and died in 1589, he could not well have dedicated his work to Cosimo the elder. V. d. Linde seems to have received a much later note from Fantacci, dated at Rome, December 18, 1872. It is proper to observe that Fantacci's list does not include the 1454 Civis Bononiæ codex, which the grand-duke of Tuscany is supposed to have carried away from Florence a few years later.

tioned is in the collection of Mr. John G. White, being a codex formerly in the possession of Mr. Robert Franz of Berlin, containing chess positions extracted from "Bonus Socius" by an editor, Paulus Guarinus (Guarino), of Forlì, a town just below the Southern boundary of Lombardy. [156]

The other (presumably somewhat later) family of these early manuscripts has for its compiler a scholar styled by himself a citizen of Bologna, "Civis Bononiæ," whose identity has not even been surmised. The pseudonym, however, strengthens, although perhaps slightly, what we have ventured to hint concerning the possible relation of the most venerable of the learned institutions of Europe to these Italian treatises. Copies of this "Civis Bononiæ" compilation are not so common as those of its predecessor; nor are there any known translations of it into modern languages except in the case of a few of the backgammon positions. Among the two oldest existing texts, as Von der Lasa tells us, are those of the Victor Emanuel library at Rome (MSS Vitt. Em. 273), and the one belonging to Prince Barberini, also in the Italian capital. [157] He states that they are ascribed to the XIIIth or XIVth

[156] It is singular, though by no means flattering to the Italian and Anglo-Saxon nationalities, that this Italian field has been tilled only by German scholars. The same may be likewise said of the most memorable and most venerable of all writings devoted to mediæval games, the Alfonsine codex; for, although Brunet y Bellet has indeed given a valuable description and reproduction of the introductory portions of the scacchic part of that MS, he does not pretend to treat the positions of even that section, and has little or nothing to say about the pages filled with examples of other games. The division (*abschnitt*) of Von der Lasa's admirable treatise, "Zur geschichte und literatur des schachspiels" (1897), devoted to these and other MSS of a practical character (that is, relating to the movements of pieces) is the sixth (pp. 112-168), divided into two chapters. The headings to these in the table of contents are: "VI. I. — Altes problemwesen: Spanischer codex des Alfonso. — Gruppirung der übrigen handschriften. — Französische MSS. *Cotton Cleop.* und *Bibl. Reg.* zu London. — Die englischen handschriften Porter und Ashmole (Hartwell). — VI. 2. — Altes problemwesen: *Bonus Socius* MS, nebst Fountaine, und Paris (alte sig. 73900), Picard (alt 7391), Wolfenbüttel extrav., MSS Lebkowitz und Rottmanner. — *Civis Bononiae* MS. — Dresden MS. — Florenz XIX. 11, 87. — *Ricardiana* MS und *Alla rabiosa*. — Guarinus. — *Bibl. Casanatense*." Van der Linde, if less critical, is, so far as chess goes, more nearly complete, endeavouring to reproduce the problems and end-games from the most important compilations of the middle ages. In his "Quellenstudien" (1881) "Das schachwerk Alfonso's X" forms the third chapter of the first division (pp. 72-120), the few lines which he devotes to the "Libro de las tablas" of the royal MS occurring on pp. 72-3. The following (fourth) chapter treats of the "Bonus Socius" MSS under the title "Das lateinisch-pikardische schachwerk des Nicholaus von S. Nicholai (um 1250-1512)," extending through pp. 121-185, there being some slight allusions to tables, as on p. 184. The subject is completed in the subsequent (fifth) chapter, "Uebersetzungen und frei bearbeitungen (um 1300-1550)," pp. 186-230. Van der Linde, in his work here cited, does not mention the pseudonym "Civis Bononiæ," apparently including all the problem compilations of Northern Italian origin under the name of the other and probably somewhat earlier collector, "Bonus Socius," whom both he and Von der Lasa concur in identifying as Nicholas de S. Nicholai, and to whom Italy, France and Germany lay claim. Nor does "Civis Bononiæ" occur in the index to Van der Linde's larger work, the "Geschichte und literatur" (1874).

[157] Of this vellum "Civis Bononiæ" codex in the Barberini palace (press-mark, X. 72), we are able to give a few general particulars. It is somewhat smaller than the codex Vitt. Em. 273, measuring 21 centimeters by 15 as against the latter's 22 $^1/_2$ by 17, but this difference is largely due to the binder's knife. The Barberini manuscript begins, like the other, with the prologue in six rhymed verses, but the opening initial (**U**) lacks the group of figures, being executed in simple blue. While the Victor Emanuel codex is apparently the work of two different hands (chess by one and the two other games by a second), the Barberini, on the other hand, exhibits the same chirography from beginning to end. The number of backgammon positions in both is the same, but we are told by a scholar whose examination has evidently not been very complete that no words similar to *sbaraill* or *sba-*

century, but seems to doubt the former ascription; indeed he himself, later on, in his last great work (p. 153), speaks of them as "MSS aus dem 15 Jahrhunderte." They are in fact, as it would seem, of about the middle of the XVth, and are admirable specimens of the book-art of the period, both as to the vellum, the chirography and the illuminations. A third copy, also on vellum, which bears marks of a somewhat greater age than these, was acquired by Von der Lasa himself at Rome, and still—it is to be supposed—forms a part of the noble library he left behind him. A fourth vellum codex is reported to have existed, until a recent period, in Florence, but has now disappeared, carried off, according to a theory of Von der Lasa, by the last grand-duke of Tuscany, whose personal property it is supposed to have been. It is said to have borne the date of 1454. The fourth text is a paper codex in the Florentine National library (XIX. 7. 37), judged, from internal evidence, to be considerably later than the foregoing, but to have had an editor of more than usual ability, a fact which gives it importance. The chess portions show a knowledge of various preceding texts; certainly, so far as that game is concerned, it is, in many respects, the most valuable, from a textual point of view, of all the "Civis Bononiæ" MSS, though inferior to all in its external execution. Besides these manuscripts Von der Lasa cites another belonging to the British Museum, of the year 1466, which is less complete than the Italian examples. This exhausts the list of these codices. We shall now endeavour to give some brief notes on most of those still to be found in Italy, and therefore pretty certain of Italian origin.

Undoubtedly the oldest of the "Bonus Socius" family is the vellum of the National library at Florence (B. A. 6-p. 2-no. 1). It begins, as Von der Lasa has already told us, with a much impaired illuminated frontispiece of a crowned king (at the left), apparently engaged at chess with a Moor or other personage (at the right)—hardly a cardinal as suggested by Von der Lasa—in a red, hood-like cap and robe; two female figures are standing in the background, not, however, gazing at the board. The prefatory matter is on the obverse of the next folio, facing the frontispiece. This is the sole text of the "Bonus Socius" group, of any approach to completeness, now in Italian libraries.

The finest as well as one of the earliest of the "Civis Bononiæ" codices in the Italian book-collections is that of the Victor Emanuel library (273) at Rome. It is a fair sized quarto of 213 vellum folios, of wich the first 3 are blank, as is the obverse of 4. The reverse of 4 contains six rhymed stanzas by the compiler, each beginning with an illuminated initial, the first at the top of the page being a large **U**, enclosing a perfectly preserved design of a youngish personage in green garments (left), engaged at chess with a bearded man in lilac robe and hood (right); close by, in the central background, sits a figure in scarlet dress and hood, gazing at the board, with his finger on his lips, indicating, perhaps, the silence necessary to be maintained by a spectator at chess; the feet of this person are visible under the table. This

raillin seem to occur anywhere. The texts of the six prefatory verses are identical in the two codices. There is nothing in Barberini X. 72. to throw any further light on the question of the compiler's personality. The name, in a hand comparatively recent, on the margin of the first written page, Gua [Giovanni?] Domenico Rinaldi, is most likely that of a former owner of the volume. A polyglot title to the volume, given on the preceding blank leaf, "Liber variorum ludorum videlicet di scacchi, sbaraglino etc.," is likewise modern.

is all of fine execution. An excellent water-colour of this illuminated frontispiece—the only exact reproduction of it ever made—is preserved in the Reykjavík National Library. The stanzas which fill this initial page have been cited in full by Van der Linde ("Quellenstudien," pp. 183-4) but, as it seems, his transcript is from the missing 1454 Florentine manuscript. We shall, therefore, copy them from the Roman (Vitt. Em.) codex; the variants, however, are few:

Ubicumque fueris ut sis gratiosus
Nec te subdes otiis nam vir otiosus
Sive sit ignobilis sive generosus
Ut testatur sapiens erit vitiosus.

Ut a te removeas vitium prefatum
Legas et intelligas hunc meum tractatum
Et sic cum nobilibus cordis adoptatum
Certus sum quot poteris invenire statum.

Statim ad scacarij me volvo partita
In quo multipliciter fiunt infinita
Quorum hic sunt plurima luculenter scita
Ne forte mens labilis quicquam sit oblita.

Hic semel positum numquam iteratur
Postea de tabulis certum dogma datur.
Tunc merellos doceo quibus plebs iocatur
Et sic sub compendio liber terminatur.

Hec huius opusculi series est tota.
Quis sim scire poteris tradens tot ignota.
Versum principiis sillabas tu nota
Earundem media littera remota.

Civis sum bononie ista qui collegi,
Qui sub breviloquio varia compegi,
Disponente domino opus quod peregi
Presentavi principi possit sive regi.

Like Van der Linde we have italicised the three enigmatical lines which are supposed to give a clue to the compiler's name. Like Von der Lasa we regard the puzzle as virtually insoluble. The verses, as Von der Lasa has remarked ("Geschichte und literatur," pp. 153 and 155), are lacking in the very notable Florentine paper codex; he notices the fact thus: "da aber in der handschrift ersichtlich ein paar der ersten blätter fehlen, so könnten die verse mit diesen verloren sein, was mir nicht warscheinlich vorkommt." It is needless to say that in the opinion last expressed, after a most careful examination of the manuscript, we coincide. In the Florentine codex (XIX. 7. 37.) has been substituted for the verses an extract, slightly altered, from the "Vetula," a Latin poem once believed to be by Ovid. As this substituted citation contains no allusion to tables or merelles we pass it by. [158] The other

[158] Of the pseudo-Ovidian poem, "Liber de Vetula," a considerable number of manuscripts exist in the libraries of Europe (see Van der Linde, "Geschichte," II., pp. 149-156, where the account of the work, so far as the chess portions are concerned, and of its various editions, is commendably full). It was long cited as a genuine production of Ovid, as far back as by that clear-headed scholar, Richard de Bury (1286). Its oldest manuscript, a quarto vellum at Montpelier (n° 366), is certainly nearly or quite contemporary with its author, now identified, with tolerable certainty, as a famous *romancier* of the XIIIth century, Richard de Fournival (Fournivalle, Fournivaux), who held a canonicate at Amiens, France,

Roman codex (Barberini) we have not examined. There is a fairly good transcript of it in the National Library of Iceland.

After these prefatory remarks we shall now turn to the oldest of the "Bonus Socius" MSS (Florence B, A. 6-p. 2-no. 1). Its contents may be thus enumerated: folio [1], obverse blank; reverse, injured illuminated frontispiece; f. j. obverse, preface; ff. j reverse-98a, chess; 98b-112a, merelles; 112a-118a, tables; 118b-119a, blank; 119b, note in finer writing by a later hand. There are 24 merelles positions and 11 at tables—all on diagrams. In "Bonus Socius" the tables diagrams are drawn perpendicularly as to the length (or longer extent); in "Civis Bononiæ" they are perpendicular as to the height (or shorter extent). In this manuscript the descriptions or solutions of the positions are on the opposite page (the left-hand page of the "open," as the Icelanders style it). Therefore the positions are at the right, as the book is held open. Two problems are given on a page, one above the other, except in the case of the ninth, which, owing to the length of the opposite

and is indeed somewhere styled chancellor of that city ("cancellarius ambianensis"). Several of his amatory romances are preserved in a manuscript form at the French National library. The earliest printed edition of the "Vetula" is that of Cologne, having neither date, place, printer's name nor signatures, of about the year 1470, which bears the title of "Publii Ovidii Nasonis liber de Vetula." A later edition was issued in the same city in 1479. We cite the edition of Wolfenbüttel 1662, a volume in which it appears with the "Speculum stultorum" of another writer, under the common title of "Opuscula duo auctorum incertorum." The "Vetula" closes the volume, and is separately paged (forming 95 pages): It is divided into numbered sections, that relating to tables beginning (p. 21) with section XXVIII of book first as follows:

Excusare tamen speciem Ludi deciorum
Nituntur, cum quâ deducitur alea pernix:
Ipsam, dicentes, pauco discrimine rerum
Pasci posse diu tanta est dilatio ludi,
Tanti lucri damnive mora est: successio cujus
Tot parit eventus, quot jactus continet in se,
Fine tenus, ludus, nec solâ sorte, sed arte
Procedunt acies, & inest industria mira.
Præsertim cum multimodè mutatio Ludi
Quolibet in jactu disponi possit, eòquod,
Sicut præcessit jactus, diversificantur
In punctatura proprie: quia schema cadendi
Nil operatur in hoc, sed punctatura docet quid
Lusoris faciat viso solertia jactu.

By a careful examination of the whole of the matter relating to backgammon it would not be difficult to obtain a definite idea of the method of play which prevailed in France some six hundred years ago. This remarkable poem was rendered into French by Jean Lefevre, born at Ressons sur Matz (near Compiègne), according to some critics between 1315 and 1320, according to others in the last years of the XIVth century. His version, or perhaps it should rather be styled a paraphrase, was only printed in 1861 the text being drawn from two early manuscripts in the Paris National library, edited by Hippolyte Cocheris. The interesting opening lines are copied by Van der Linde (op. cit., p. 154). The chapters have headings, that concerning tables being: "Du jeu des tables et comment Ovide dit qu'ilz ne sont point mains dommagables que les dez," the opening lines (p. 66) being

Aucuns se veulent excuser
Du gieu des dez, pour amuser
Au gieu qui est de trente tables [men];
Ne sont gaires mains dommagables,
C'est un gieu de guerre partie,
Quinze en a de chascune partie.
Si dïent quant a leur oppose,
Qu'on paist le gieu be pou de chose,

solution, is alone in the centre of its page. On the inside of the manuscript's first cover is a note by a former owner recording the fact in regard to the codex, that it "è molto tempo che si trova in casa nostra de Baldouinattj." The work has, of course, no proper title, but, in his preface, the author, after some philosophising, and not a few moral reflections, says: ("Idcirco ego bonus socius, sociorum meorum precibus acquiescens, partita que uideram...,")—"Therefore I, a good companion, yielding to the prayers of my companions, have edited in this little book those positions which I had seen, as well as those which I have made by my own study, in the games of chess and tables as well as in that of merelles ("de ludvs scaccorum alearumque etiam marellorum in hoc libello"), thus reversing the order in which, in the text, merelles and backgammon actually occur. There are, later on, in the opening of the description or solution of the first tables (backgammon) problem, a few special preliminary words, in which the reader is told that these problems (*ista partita*) are of tables, that some are played out with

Car gaaing ni vient pas en l'euro,
Et la dommaige assez demeure,
Par la longue dilacion
Du gieu par variacion;
Car autant y a d'aventures
Comme on y gecte de pointures.
Le gieu ne se fait point par sort,
Mais par art assavoir plus fort.
De deux coulours qui les champissent,
De deux chasteauls en un champ yssent.
Dont merveilleuse est l'industrie,
Et soutille en est la maistrie,
Pour ce qu'on puet multiplier
Son gieu, par ses tables lier,
Selon les poins de la cheance,
Qui enseignent quelle ordonance
Le joueur peut de ses gens faire,
Et commeunt doit ses tables traire
Par devers soy, et combiner
Si a peril au cheminer.

These form, reckoning a repeated couplet which we have omitted, lines 1269-1298, but the whole tables section is continued to line 1416 (p. 66-72). Free as is the version, or perhaps because of its freeness, the French poem greatly facilitates the understanding of the Latin original. We add likewise the opening lines of the brief merelles section (p. 86), which have the descriptive heading: "Ci parle du gieu des merelles auquel souloient anciennement jouer les pucelles." They begin:

Autres gieux sont que les pucelles
Scevent, mais petites nouvelles
Sont du dire et du raconter
Chose qui a pou peut monter.
Ces gieux sont nommez aux merelles,
Dont juvenceaulx et juvencelles
Se jeuent dessus une table.
Douze ou neuf font le gieu estable,
Mais a douze prent sans faillir
Celle qui puet oultre saillir
Dessus l'autre par adventure.

The whole section forms lines 1735-1754. The words "douze ou neuf" look like a relationship to the "twelve men morris" and "nine men morris" of England and America, although a much later manuscript (1650) of the poem speaks of the game as one "qui se fait par neuf ou par dix merelles," where "dix" may possibly be an error for "douze."

two dice (*cum duobus taxillis*) and some with three, and that some are optative games (*ludi optatiui*)—ending with the phrase which we copy literally; "ut hō sine taxillis optet qd' uelit." Thereafter follows the descriptive solution beginning: "Et est iste primus ludus. *buffa* in duobus taxillis." Here we have again the *bufa* of king Alfonso, the remotest form of the present German name of backgammon (*puff*). These solutions generally record, at their very beginning, the number of dice employed at each throw, or otherwise comment on the nature of the problem, as, for instance, (117a). "Istud partitum optimum sed difficilimum ad plenum" (*ad plenum* being, perhaps, the modern French "plein"); (115b1) "Iste ludus est ualde deceptorius;" (115b2) "Ludus iste est optatiuus in tribus taxillis." The positions mostly demand three dice, which, for various reasons, seems to us the older method, at any rate in European tables. Among the technical words occurring we notice *domus* (home-board), *albe* (plural, white), *negri*, (black), *as*, *deus*, *trai*, *quater*, *cinc*, *sis*, *amesas* (*ambas as*), *ternes*, *sines*.. The eleven positions at tables to be found in this volume all appear again in the incomplete Italian codex (XIX. 7. 51) in the same Florentine library.

We come now to the Roman vellum codex (Vitt. Em. 273) of the "Civis Bononiæ" redaction, certainly, in its execution and in its present well-preserved condition, the most splendid of them all. It starts with blank folios numbered (numbering modern) 1, 2, 3, followed by 4, of which the obverse is blank, while the reverse begins with a very ornate initial **U**, enclosing the illuminated group of three figures already described (a youngish personage in green garments seated at chess against a bearded man in lilac robe and hood, with a third person in scarlet vestments sitting in the central background, looking on); then come the prefatory verses we have cited, written as prose, each stanza forming a paragraph commencing with a fine initial in two colours; to the first of the stanzas appertains the much larger initial **U** at the head of the page. After these follows the chess text, the first position on f. 5a, the last on f. 148b. all the diagrams filled. The 76 *partita* at tables occupy ff. 149a-186b, and are followed by 4 unused or vacant diagrams on ff. 187a-188b. The volume ends with the 48 merelles problems, ff. 189a-212b, concluding with an unused morris diagram on the last folio (213a). Throughout this beautiful vellum every page opens with an illuminated initial letter in two colours. The design of the diagram for tables represents (for the first time?) the one (half) table joined to the other by hinges, so that the two can be shut together like a modern backgammon (and chess) board; the table has, however, as usual at this early period, *houses* instead of points. Each one of the positions, chess, tables or morris, is placed in the centre of the page, having the descriptive text around it on the three exterior margins, the brilliant initials (blue and red, or red and violet) being uniformly in the upper left-hand corner. The diagrams are in blue, having the space between the external lines in faint olive green; the men are in red (=light or white) and blue (=black). In these backgammon diagrams every man is figured by a coloured disc (never by numbers, showing how many stand on a certain point).

It is impossible, within our limits, to copy much of the text of this monumental codex. We give, therefore, only the opening lines of some of the descriptions of the *partita*, premising that we have not often ventured to change the orthography, and that we have underscored the names of the

various modes of play: (151b) "Istud partitum est de testa optatiuum de tribus taxillis;" (152b) "Iste ludus est optatiuus in tribus taxillis;" (155b) "Istud partitum est de *sbarail* cum duobus taxillis;" (163a) "Istud partitum est de *sbarail* optativum;" (163b) "Istud partitum est partitum optatiuum... et est de *minoret*;" (167b) "Istud partitum est de *minoret* in uno taxillo et uocatur *le merlin*;" (168a) "Albe [usually written instead of *albæ*] primo trahunt et

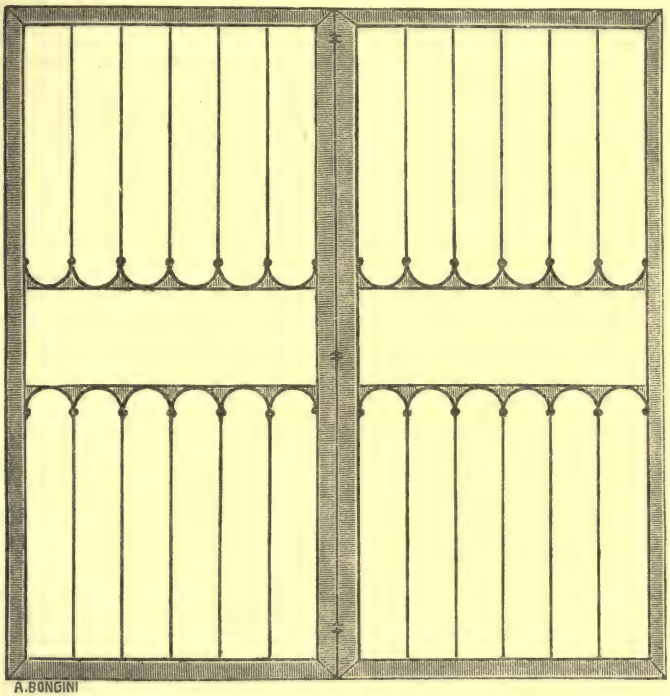


Fig. 18.

faciunt minoret et negre maioret;" (168b) "In isto partito de *minoret* trahunt primo nigre;" (175b) "Istud partitum est de *la buf* in duobus taxillis et stant omnes in domo;" (178a) "Istud partitum est de *sbarail*;" (178b) "Omnes utriusque partis sunt affidate, et est partitum del *sbarail* in tribus taxillis;" (181a) "In isto partito tam nigre quam albe stant in domo ad eleuandum, et est de *sbarail* in tribus taxillis;" (182b) "Istud partitum est de *bethelas* in tribus taxillis;" (183a) "Istud partitum est de ludo qui dicitur *baldrac*, qui est ludus subtilis et non multum usitatus;" (183b) "Istud partitum est de *limperial* in duobus taxillis et sex semper in terno;" (184a) "Istud partitum est de *limperial* in duobus taxillis et sex pro terno;" (184b) "Istud partitum sic precedens est de *limperial* in duobus taxillis et sex in tertio, et habent nigre uoltam;" (185b) "In isto partito omnes sunt affidate." The text introducing the first tables position (149a) begins with the general statement: "Ista sunt partita tabularum," where we find the name given as *tabulæ* (in

genitive, *tabularum*). It will be observed that we have here many of the Alfonsine names of the varying methods of play (varieties), like *buf* (Spanish "bufa"), *imperial* (very likely "emperador"), *baldrac* ("la bufa de baldrac"), as well as an early form of the Italian "sbaraglio" (*sbarail*), hereafter to be treated; likewise certain of the varieties cited in the British Museum codex (MSS reg. 13. A. XVIII), the text of which we have reproduced (pp. 161-165), such as *imperial* and *sbarail* ("baralie"). Very likely other coincidences between the manuscripts of Madrid, Florence (and Rome) and London might be discovered by a capable investigator.

The last of these codices of Italian origin on which we shall bestow more than a cursory notice, is the paper "Civis Bononiæ" one of Florence (XIX. 7. 37) [159]. The folios of this manuscript have been neatly numbered by means of printing-type (stamped by hand), and the positions, as usual, are in colours. The anonymous editor has an introduction, which Von der Lasa ("Geschichte und literatur," pp. 154-155) has reproduced in the original Latin. It seems to be his opinion that this editor prepared the exemplar for the use of teachers, or perhaps for those whom we now style "professional players." The chess positions, as in general, come first, and are directly followed by those at tables (72 in number), occupying ff. 157a to 192b, when they are succeeded by the 44 at morris (merelles); there are then added several supplementary chess problems; the inserted ten MS folios by Von der Lasa finally complete the volume. The diagrams are drawn at the bottom, or on the lower half of each page, the upper portion containing the description or solution of the position. The three colours used are yellow for the board, and red and black for the men. In the backgammon *partita* the men are sometimes represented by small discs (red and black), sometimes by numbers (red and black), defining the number of pieces occupying the points on which the numbers are marked. The points to which the pieces are to be

[159] In this codex, XIX 7. 37, are to be found no such beautiful chirography, no such brilliant illuminations as are to be seen in the earlier ones of which we have been writing, but it is a piece of work of no little elegance, and, as has been stated in the text, of excellent editorship. It will always, in the shape in which we now see it, be of high interest to the student of chess literature because of the "Complemento al codice classe XIX. 7. 37 della R. Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze," as he styles it, thoughtfully appended to it by Von der Lasa, after one of his visits of research to Italy. It opens with a prefatory note written in excellent Italian by himself, as follows: "Il codice chart. XIX. 7. 37 è alquanto incompleto. Dopo la carta 46 verso trovasi mancante un intiero quinterno, e la numerazione riprende colla carta 55 recto. Mancano anche due pagine intorno la 103ª carta. La Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale Vittorio Emanuele di Roma possiede un codice membr. nº 273 completo e quasi eguale al fiorentino. Questo manoscritto 273 contiene 286 posizioni del giuoco di scacchi ed altre figure "tabularum et merellorum." Le posizioni sono le stesse come quelle sulle carte 8-151 terzo del codice di Firenze, e possono supplirne i numeri mancanti. Per altro i partiti fiorentini dalla carta 152ª alla 167ª verso, siccome 232 recto-239 recto, non esistono nel manoscritto della Biblioteca Nazionale di Roma, nè pure in un codice membr. della mia biblioteca propria, esclusivamente destinata al giuoco degli scacchi. Il codice XIX. 7. 37, dunque, comprende più degli altri." This is followed by 18 chess-positions, with explanatory texts, on 9 folios — the diagrams in blue and the indications of the pieces in red and black. The whole is a notable piece of work, carried out with all the writer's known lucidity and exactness. At bottom of the reverse of the final folio is his attestation and signature as well as the date: "Pro vera copia: Wiesbaden 18 Maggio 1891. Heydebrand ud Lasa." The abbreviation after "Heydebrand" may be either *ud* (und der), or *vd* (von der), both of which, as the reader is aware would be proper and both of which he used. It need not be said that this "complemento" will greatly lighten the labour of future investigators.

moved are often indicated, on the diagrams and in the descriptions, by letters as *a*, *b*, *c*, (black and red), generally of a Gothic (black-letter) form.

We shall now again quote the opening lines of several of these solutions, to show their similiarity to those previously cited, and shall then call attention to some of the technical words and phrases employed. The first problem (157a) begins with a brief introduction to the backgammon collection: "Ista sunt partita tabularum," and so on. In some, if not all of the descriptions, the player of the white (*tu cum albis*) is addressed. The text to the eighth position (160b) commences: "Iste ludus est optatiuus in tribus taxillis et quicquid facient albe facient et nigre, et albe stant quinque in domo sua, nigre in sua tres et vincunt albe. Primo de albis fac buf de quatern de tabula extrinseca...;" then (163b) "Istud partitum est in *sbaraille* cum duobus taxillis et sex semper pro tertio, et primo trahunt albe et sunt omnes affidate et nigre non sunt affidate;" (164a) "Hic ludus est de *menoret* in duobus taxillis;" (170a) "Istud partitum est de *sbaraill*" (the word *texta* having been erased and *sbaraill* inserted in its place by a later hand); (174a) "Istud partitum est de *menoret* in uno taxillo tantum et uocatur *le merlin*;" (176a) "Istud partitum est de testa in tribus taxillis;" (178b) "Istud partitum est de testa et luditur in tribus taxillis et est domus albarum vbi stant 12 albe et domus nigre ubi stat sola alba et habent albe tractum et perdit nigra (?) ad fallum." (Now begins the play proper) "Tu cum albis lude et denuda tot quot potes...;" (180a) "In isto ludo trahunt nigre primo et est de testa cum tribus taxillis et veniet illa extrinseca ut eleuentur;" (180b) "Istud partitum est de testa et luditur cum tribus taxillis et habent nigre uicem et stant ad eleuandum et alba habet circuire tabulerium et eleuare sicut moris est. Vnde si non percutiet aliquam de nigris perdis sed nigre sunt priores quia ut plurimum accedit duo aut as...;" (181b) "Istud partitum est de *la buf* in duobus taxillis et est domus in punctis et introitus vbi sunt albe;" (182b) "Istud partitum est de *la buf* in duobus taxillis. Ponetes tres pro uno et pone unum pro tribus;" (183b) "Istud partitum est de *sbarail* in duobus taxillis;" (184b) "Istud partitum est de *sbaraillin* in duobus taxillis et 6 semper pro 3° et habent nigre tractum;" (184b) "Omnius utriusque sunt affidate et est partitum de *sbarail* in tribus taxillis;" (185b) "Istud partitum est de *sbaril* in tribus taxillis;" (188a) "Istud partitum est *delimperial* in duobus taxillis et sex pro tertio;" (189b) "Istud partitum est de *bethelas* in tribus taxillis;" (190a) "Istud partitum est ludo qui dicitur *baldrac*, qui est ludus subtilis et non multum vsitatus" (the third letter in *baldrac* having been inserted by way of correction; (190b) "Istud partitum est de *limperial*;" (192b) "Istud partitum est optatiuum et in tribus taxillis et luditur ad modum *minoreti* et nigre habent tractum."

Much of this is repetition but it serves to show how similar are the two "Civis Bononiæ" manuscripts, the Roman and the Florentine. The following names given to varieties will be observed: *sbarail* (*sbaraill*, *sbaril*), coincident with the "*baralie*" of the British Museum manuscript and the later Italian "*sbaraglio*;" *sbaraillin* (probably the Italian "*sbaraglino*"); *testa* (*texta*) *merlin* (*le merlin*); *imperial* (*limperial*)—reminding us of "emperador" and "imperial" in foreign codices; *bethelas*; *baldrac* (occurring among the Alfonsine names); *minoretus* (*minoretum?*), the minoretto" of a subsequent period in north Italy); *buf* (*la buf*, to which we have frequently alluded). It is also to be noted that several of these names are preceded

by a modern Romance article, as *la buf*, *limperial*, *le merlin*, perhaps showing them to have originated in the vulgar speech. As to technical words in general we have gathered, in our hasty study, a good many which we give, wherever possible and necessary, with interpretations. We draw from all the Latin manuscripts here examined: *affidatus*, *affidati; albœ* (the white); *amb as*, *ambas*, *amesas* (double aces); *as* (ace); *avantagium* (advantage, better position); *baldrac* (a variety at backgammon); *bethelas* (a variety at backgammon); *buf*, *la buf* (a variety of backgammon), used also as a technical term in such phrases as *buf de as*, *buf de du*, *buf de cinc*, *buf de terne*, *buf de quaterne*, *buf de sin* (*sine*), as *facere buf de as: cinc*, *cinque*, *cinques* (five or fives); *deus*, *du*, *duos* (deuce, deuces); *domus* (home-board), as *in domo* (in the home board); *elevare*, *ad elevandum; ad fallum*, as in *perdere ad fallum; imperial* (a variety of backgammon); *introitus; merlin*, *le merlin* (a variety of backgammon); *majoret*, used technically as a contrast to *minoret*, as *facere minoret*, *facere majoret*; *minoret*, *menoret* (a variety of backgammon, but used technically in *facere minoret; nigræ* (the black); *optativus; ad plenum; quater*, *quatre*, *quaterna*, *quaternes* (four, fours); *quines*, *quinques* (see *cinc*); *sbarail*, *sbaraill*, *sbaraillé* (a variety of backgammon); *sbaraillin* (a variety of backgammon played with two dice); *sines*, *sanas; si*, *sex* (six, see also *tertium*); *tabula* (man, piece); *tabulerium* (board); *taxillus* (die); *tertium* in the phrases *sex pro tertio*, *sex semper pro tertio*, meaning that six or sixes are to be counted for a third (imaginary) die, when only two dice are actually used, as *in* (*cum*) *duobus taxillis et sex pro tertio; texta*, *testa*, (a special form of backgammon); *tres*, *terz*, *terne*, *ternes* (three, threes). Some of these words are cited from imperfect copies of extracts from the manuscripts and are doubtless more or less inexact.

In addition to the codices to be found in Italy from which we have already quoted, we ought to mention here the paper manuscript preserved in the great Florentine library, where it bears the press-mark XIX. 7. 51. It is a compilation in Italian, and can hardly be said to belong either to the "Bonus Socius" or the "Civis Bononiæ" family. The most interesting description of its chess portion is that given by Von der Lasa ("Geschichte und literatur," pp. 163-165), who ascribes it to the beginning of the XVIth century, "oder mag ein wenig älter sein." He likewise, from the occurrence of certain vocables, believes it to be of Tuscan origin. This codex is imperfect. It has chess diagrams on ff. 1 a — 149ab, with Italian descriptions below most of them, but the diagrams on ff. 25b-27b, 30a-50b are blank, and the problems ff. 146a, 147b, 148a-149b lack the descriptive solutions; f. 149 is followed by many unnumbered folios with blank chess diagrams. Thereafter come a numbered folio, 186a, with a 7-knights puzzle limited to the 9 squares in a corner of the chessboard, and 186b with a 16-pawns problem; next we have 24 merelles positions with descriptions; and finally 10 (or 11?) problems at tables, only one accompanied by a descriptive solution, which is to be regretted because of the Italian technical terms thus missing. Von der Lasa specially mentions an example of the chess puzzle known as the "Knight's tour" on f. 28b as "das älteste beispiel eines vollkommenen rösselsprunges." The single problem in the section devoted to tables, which has an explanatory solution attached, has over the diagram a title which seems to read: "L'abbaco de fuorj." Copied as accurately as may be, the description is as follows: "Li bianchi sono in casa per leuarsi, et cosi li

sej neri et hassi a rimetter quella che sta fuorj. Giuocasi con tre dadj et hanno il tratto li neri, et ciò che fanno li neri hanno a far li bianchi" (a very common phrase this last in the Latin codices) "et vincere li neri per leuarsi prima che li bianchi et fa così. Con li neri chi hanno il tratto farai .6. et .2. rimettendo quelle che è fuora, et .2. leua quella che è in sul dua, li bianchi faranno duino et cinque et non potranno leuare nulla. Le neri di poi facciano terno et cinque levandoni 3. Li bianchi faranno il medesimo, et leueranno dua, et riferanno una, tu poi fa con le neri cinquino et sej, et leuansi tutti." This is probably the oldest bit of Italian, having to do with backgammon, to be found in Italy, but may be exceeded in age by the Italian passage now to be noticed. [160]

[160] Very little has hitherto been known of Paolo Guarino (as the name stands in the vernacular, a variant being "Guerini"), although he has long been recognised by the historians of chess letters as the editor of an important and well-made collection of seventy-six positions selected in 1512 from the Florentine manuscripts (see Von der Lasa's "Zur geschichte," p. 165, and more particularly Van der Linde's "Geschichte," II., pp. 295-7). Thanks, for the most part, to the researches of the learned Italian palæographer, Dr. Giuseppe Mazzatinti, professor in the royal lyceum at Forlì and librarian of the Forlivese communal library, we are now, however, more or less familiar with some of the prominent incidents of Guarino's life. He was a man of more than usual mark in his day and in the ancient provincial city in which he was born and resided, though descended from Bolognese ancestors. Besides being a cultivator of general literature, he was an architect by profession, and, as such, in a period of stress (1503), was one of the commission which superintended the task of strengthening and otherwise improving the castle, or *rocca*, of Forlì, which was, at the same time, the chief feature in the works defending the city, and the abode of its princes. He afterwards (1517) furnished a plan for the erection of a notable church (S. Michele de' Battuti Rossi) in his native city. Guarino also understood and practised the art of printing—not an ordinary accomplishment in that remote trans-apennine region in the closing years of the XVth century. To him is owing the issue of the first book printed at Forlì, a work of unique typographical interest, the singular story of which can be told here only in the barest outline. It seems that Nicola Feretti (Nicholas Ferrettus), a pupil of those three great humanists, Valla, Filelfo and Lascaris—himself, later, the head of a widely-renowned school of grammar at Venice—resided for a while at Forlì, and there composed a treatise, "De elegantia linguae latinae," subsequently published both at Paris (without date) and at Venice (1507). But its earliest edition saw the light at Forlì, being, as we have hinted, the first production of the then comparatively new art in that town. It is a thin quarto, printed on rather heavy paper, consisting of 30 unnumbered folios, the expressed signatures extending from *a ii* to *e iii*, having a page composed of 40 to 42 lines (usually not exceeding the former number), and closing with a printer's mark occupying nearly all the available space of the final page. This last, like so many of the kind in that and the following age in Italy, was made up of a double cross surmounting a circular design, with the initials P G [= Paolo Guarino] above the circles on the left side, and I I B [= Joannes Jacobus de Benedictis] in the same position at the right. Below, in the corners, are the initials C O [Cæsar Octavianus?]. In the colophon, on the obverse of the final folio, the book is said to be issued "Opera & impēsa Pauli guarini de guarinis Foroliuiēsis" [that is, in the vulgar, Paolo Guarino de' Guarini of Forlì—the form of the name indicating the nobility of the bearer] "& Ioānis Iacobi de Benedictis Bononiensis Impressoris: et socii: hoc opus est Impressum Forliuli: emendatum uero per ipsum auctorem: ut apparet in eiusdem epistola: in fine secundi libri: Anno fidei christianę, M . CCCC . L xxxx V . xvi klēdas Maii." From all this we deduce that Paolo Guarini was the publisher, at whose expense the work was done by the printer (*impressor*) from Bologna, Giovanni Jacopo de Benedictis (or de' Benedetti), with other associates (*et socii* = "and company"); that the press was at Forlì (*Forlivii*); that Feretti's manuscript had been corrected by his own hand, "as appears from his letter at the end of the second book" (the treatise being in three books); and that the printing was completed May 16, 1495. So far there is nothing extraordinary in the matter. Guarino had evidently induced a Bolognese printer to come and establish himself at Forlì, had united with others in an attempt to make the novel undertaking successful, and had assumed the general direction of the affair. For its first work the new printing-office had received from some source (apparently from the author himself) the manuscript of Feretti, and had entered

We return to our consideration of the "Civis Bononiæ" collection; and this is, therefore, the place to mention another fragment of an Italian version of this second great compilation (or, as Van der Linde will have it, of the "second edition" of the "Bonus Socius" work). In the British Museum there is a quarto manuscript volume containing three very different treatises, the second one being a transcript of the Latin "Civis Bononiæ" (Additional MSS 9351, lettered on the back: "Tractatus varii de ludis etc."). There is little that is attractive about the transcript. Its chirography is poor and its paper of a very ordinary sort. The diagrammed positions of the three

in good earnest upon the task of making its existence felt. Now comes the remarkable part of the tale. A very few days after the appearance of the issue of the "De elegantia" bearing the name of Guarino in its imprint, another edition of the same treatise comes out from another press in the very same town, but differing greatly from the preceding one in its typography. It was likewise in quarto, in the Latin type, embracing 28 unnumbered folios, the printed signatures running from *a ii* to *e ii*, each page having its 40 to 42 lines (ordinarily limited to the former number); but it was printed in type of a notably different face, and had at the end no veritable printer's mark. Unlike the issue of Guarino it is adorned with two very striking cuts, taken from Venetian works of a little earlier date, one on its first, the other on its last page. The first represents a professor seated, in the middle background, on his cathedra, a large book resting on a table in front of him, engaged in instructing a body of students in hoods and robes, which is divided into two groups, seated on benches on either hand, before each group being a low desk, on which books rest, while two boys, holding books, are placed on stools in the foreground, with a dog (cat?) seated between them; the other cut, on the reverse of the final folio — possibly it may be intended to serve as a printer's mark — precedes the colophon and depicts, in the central background, a hill, surmounted by a temple or other structure, at the left of the summit a group of three standing female figures, one crowned, on the right a group of three cattle, while in the middle foreground is taking place a combat between a man and a centaur. Furthermore, this edition is dissimilar to the elder one in having many Florentine chapter-initials instead of the small spaces left for the insertion of hand-made (illuminated) initials as in its predecessor, in its numerous printed marginal references, and in its frequent employment of the paragraph-sign (¶). The newer edition has one considerable omission. This is in the second epistle to Octavian, ruler of Forlì, placed at the end of the second book, nearly two pages of matter falling out (between the words *Ci ualde placebit* and *Felix sis opto Princeps*) — an exclusion which seems to indicate that the author had little (or at any rate less) to do with the issue coming from the more recent and rival establishment. The colophon of this edition reads thus: "¶ Hoc opus est impressum Forliuii per me Hieronymum Medesanum Parmensem: nouiterq; p ipsum Auctorem correptum aditum & emendatum Anno domini .M.CCCCLXXXXV. die uero .XXV. Mai Regnante Illustrissimo Prīcipi nostro domino Octauiano de Riario: ac Inclito domino Iacobo Pheo gubernatori dignitissimo." — the governor Giacomo Feo here cited, it may be well enough to say, was slain this very same year (1495), on account of a false suspicion of treason. It will thus be seen that the printer of this edition is from Parma, his name, in its vernacular form, being, perhaps, Girolamo Medesano; and that the date, ". XXV. Mai," is here substituted for "XVI klēdas Mai," of the other issues, the month and year being the same in both editions. The explanation of this singular typographical puzzle must be left to the further researches of Italian bibliographers. The sole library, so far as we know, in which both of these rare impressions are to be found is that of the British Museum. The only other printed work with which the name of Paolo Guarino is in any way associated, is an important document ("diploma") executed by him in an impression of 500 copies for the dissolute Cesar Borgia, whose one redeeming quality, as in the case of his even more infamous sister, was a willing patronage of letters and lettered men. This bore, as there is reason to believe, the name or other sign-manual of Guarino, and was dated at Forlì, December 21, 1500, indicating the continued existence, five years later than the appearance of Feretti's tractate, of Guarino's Forlivese press, whether meanwhile active or not. No copy is now known, but an account of it is given by the chronicler Bernardi (I. f. 353 a). In the previous year another striking event in the life of Guarino occurred. The real ruling power in Forlì, at that date, was the celebrated Caterina Sforza — whose career is the theme of one of the ablest of recent Italian biographies — a natural daughter of Galeazzo, duke of Milan; she had

games are in black and faded red, occupying the lower halves of the pages, having the explanatory solutions above them. Each page contains two problems side by side, and, of course, two paragraphs of descriptive text. Folios 8-10, 17-35 (according to the numeration, which is very recent, ff. 11-16 are lacking, but there is nothing to show that the numeration itself is not erroneous) are occupied by the tables positions; ff. 36-48 by those at merelles, and ff. 49-69 by those at chess. At the beginning of this last section, in a comparatively modern hand, is written a date which Von der Lasa gives as 1466, but which, whatever it may be, seems to be of little value. The binding

espoused Girolamo Riario, lord of Forlì and Imola — nominally a nephew but really a son of the avaricious and wealthy pope, Sixtus IV — and was married later in life to Giovanni de' Medici. By Girolamo she had six children, the eldest of whom, Octavian, had, in name at least, succeeded to his father's principality. The second, Cesare, through the persuasive efforts of his mother, was designated in January 1499 by that wickedest of all the popes, Alexander VI, to the elevated office of archbishop of Pisa, and Paolo Guarino was selected to accompany the new prelate to his see in the high capacity of seneschal. Cesare was only nineteen years of age and could therefore hardly be regarded as a venerable ecclesiastical dignitary, but Caterina, in her letter to the head of the church, had commended him as "pieno di ogni virtù e modestia." He ultimately received the title of bishop of Malaga (1518) and closed a peaceable life some years later at Padova. Guarino soon returned to his home. In 1509 he was sent by the magistracy of Forlì on a mission to the cardinal legate, or papal governor of Romagna — the holder of an office which, some months later, was conferred on cardinal de' Medici, afterwards the brilliant pope Leo X — "d' onde tornarò con patenti favorevoli." In 1512 — the very year in which Guarino was at work at his "Liber de partitis scaccorum" — the horrors of real war were raging in his native region, in which French and Spanish, papal and other Italian troops were taking part. The French, who had followed to Italy that renowned general, Gaston de Foix, duke of Nemours, had, by their threatened movements, led to the flight of a large portion of the wealthier inhabitants of Forlì. But a few of the patriotic leaders of the people remained. A French commisioner suddenly visited the city and demanded an immediate supply of stores, for the use of the not very distant French camp, from the already impoverished citizens. The few notable denizens still within the walls, among them "Ser Paolo Guerrini," as he is styled by the narrator of the event, assembled for deliberation, but were soon satisfied that the supplies asked for must be forthcoming in order to avoid the destruction of their homes. Guarino was appointed a commissioner to arrange, with the aid of another member of the small company, the difficult affair, which he did with so much energy and tact that the town was finally saved from the menaced danger. This good citizen was blessed, we are told with an amiable and intelligent wife, Maddalena, daughter of Antonio Ostoli, who bore him two sons and three daughters. He was an intimate friend of the chronicler, Andrea Bernardi, (called "Novacula" after the manner of his day), whose "Cronache forlivesi" finally became accessible to the reading world, edited by G. Mazzatinti, in the edition of Bologna 1895-6 (in three, or, titularly, two volumes). Not a few mentions of his friend occur in its pages. Bernardi left a number of volumes by will to Guarino, who, as we shall see, was a great collector of whatever bore upon the history of Forlì. Guarino must have been likewise known to Leandro Alberti, author of the "Descrittione di tutta Italia," the first edition of which is of Bologna 1550, but which remained, for more than a century, the chief authority on Italian topography. In that earliest impression Alberti gives us the date of Guarino's demise, with a pleasant characterisation of his character and pursuits (f. 280, obv.): "Passò nell' anno 1520 à meglior uita Paulo Guirino p suoi antenati Bolognese, huomo di dolcissimo ingegno & molto urbano & ciuile. Et benche non hauesse gran conoscenza di lettere latine, nondimeno riportò assai lodo de i uersi uolgari, de li quali molto se delattaua cõ Maddalena sua amãtissimo cõsorte. Molto s' affaticò in raccogliere le cose memorabili di Forlì cõe dalli libri da lui scritti, conoscere si può." Of his Italian poetry (if any) and of the historical works of Guarino, here recorded, we have no nearer knowledge. Some of them may still exist, hidden away in one or more of the old libraries or archives of Romagna. Another historical work, the "Svpplemento istorico dell' antica città di Forlì" of Sigismondo Marchesi (Forlì 1678), also contains allusions to Guarino, of which we have already availed ourselves. The volume gives a representation of the Guarino arms (p. 282), which are described as "campo d' oro, aquila nera, [3] fascie nere."

of the treatise on games has pretty certainly left its three divisions wrongly placed. This is shown not only by the position of the above-mentioned date, but also by the circumstance that the six Latin "Civis Bononiæ" verses, containing the enigmatical lines referring to the author's name, are on f. 49a, the first chess page. Evidently the order should be: chess, backgammon, merelles. The tables or backgammon subdivision starts with "[I]sta sunt partita tabularum," and includes 44 positions. Turning over the leaves we observe the names of the varieties of the game with no marked divergencies from those to be found in the Florence and Roman exemplars. The descriptions begin as usual: "Iste ludus est de *testa*" (in one place "de la *texta*"); "Istud partitum est de *sbarelle*" (elsewhere written *sbaraile* and *sbaraill*); "Istud partitum est de *minoret*;" "Istud partitum est de *buff*" (elsewhere "de la *buff*"); and thereafter occur likewise *bethelas* and *limperial*. On f. 31b the opening of the text is: "Istud ludus est partitum qui dicitur *baldrac*," and on f. 23a: "Iste ludus est ualde deceptorius.,' The familiar phrases recur: "facient albe buff," "buff das" (de as), "buff de du," "buff de terne," "buff de quaterne," "buff de sinne," "optativus;" "sex semper pro tertio;" "perdere ad fallum," and so on. But the main feature of this manuscript to us is that the final ten descriptive solutions (ff. 33a-35b) are in Italian; they are most likely added to this manuscript by later hands, and go far to prove that it is a copy (of an early "Civis Bononiæ" manuscript) made in Italy. The first of these texts commences: "Li rossi sono octo el nigri sono tre aminoreto [a minorretto] curto cum [sic] tre dadj;" another one opens thus: "Questo è un partita da tauole che se fa aminoret da tre dadj;" and we likewise have: "Questo è giocho de *sbaraino*." The expression *minoreto curto* has, very likely, the signification of the German "das kurze puff," of which we shall read hereafter. Among the technical terms are "buff d'assi," "ambassi," duino," etc. The last two Italian descriptions are in a hand differing from any found elsewhere in the manuscript. Von der Lasa merely alludes to this paper codex (p. 152), and Van der Linde ("Quellenstudien," pp. 180-181) has a somewhat longer report of it, reproducing (pp. 181-182) seven of its chess positions.

Just as the writing of this portion of the present work is in progress, another venerable literary monument devoted to the triad of mediæval games has been passing through a London auction chamber—certainly one of the most beautiful of these old codices on vellum. Aside from the worth of its contents it possesses a high value as a specimen of the art of the XIVth century, a fact shown by the great price given for it. It was sold, concurrently with the rest of the library formerly belonging to Sir Andrew Fountaine of Narford Hall, in the English county of Norfolk, by whom it was brought together during the reigns of queen Anne and king George II. Even the chess portion of this magnificent production has never been adequately described. Van der Linde's description ("Quellenstudien," p. 186) hardly covers fifteen lines, and is accompanied by references to two of the positions included in its pages; Von der Lasa's account ("Zur geschichte," pp. 141-2) is no longer, although he cites one problem, the common possession of this and two other early authorities (p. 149). Von der Lasa had especial opportunity for its study by means of Mr. John G. White's transcript. He considers its language to be a dialect similar to those prevalent in Normandy and Picardy in the Old-French period. The palæographers speak of it, with some vagueness, as

Anglo-Norman work. Von der Lasa states that it belongs to the "Bonus Socius" group, but is in error when he says that "Im Fountaine MS fehlt der Anfang." He derived this impression from the fact that the beautiful large illuminated initial, with which its text begins, occupies an unusual position above the text, the letter proper being indeed at the upper right hand corner; it is a C, noticeable enough when regarded with care, but concealed by its unusual position and by the fashion of the marginal arabesques connected with and springing out of it, similar to those which adorn very many of the subsequent (chess) paginal margins. Van der Linde apparently understood this matter rightly, for he gives the opening lines of the manuscript, initial and all: "Chil dor traient primiers & uellent matter (mate) les rouges a deus traits ne plus ne moins, preng les ruges a deffendre car il ne le puent fair." The chess descriptive text begins (after the first page) on the right margin of the page close beside the problem, and runs down below it on the lower portion of the page. The backgammon position is always at the top of the page and the whole of the descriptive solution below it—no part of the text being marginal. The exterior lines or frames of all the diagrams are in gold, the men in red and gold. Each description commences with a handsome two-coloured (blue and red, or gold and pale blue or lilac) illuminated initials—some of them quite large—while the ground tone both of the backgammon and morris boards is a deep blue. The chess portion extends from f. 1a to 144b, while f. 145a has an incomplete blank diagram and f. 146b a complete vacant one. These leaves are followed by the 22 folios of the backgammon division, comprising 44 positions, the volume ending with 14 folios devoted to the morris game, the text of this latter beginning on the reverse of the first morris fôlio, the problems filling ff. 2a-14a, the final page being wholly blank; thus the morris positions number 25 in all.

The text of the initial backgammon position is (except where errors occur in the present copy) as follows: "Cis gius est de letiest [*testa* or *texta*] et souhaidans en iii des [dice] et dient celles dor, ⌈= d'or, of gold⌋ q̄ elles leueront toutes de uant che q̄les rouges soient hors cest en atiauent chelles dor p̄mers et les rouges seront che meisme q̄ celles dor et se les rouges le perdent aucū point quelles ne puissent toudis faire tout le giu al dor le uollent perdre tu auoec celles dor le fai .du. et as. et leaieme de un quaerne il fera un quaerne deus et as et tu deus et ambes .as. enferant les sienes atout le trait et il cecemeisme. hoste lune en ferant lune des sienes et fai deus et ambes .as. et il ce meisme tu feras le siene par deus et laut e feras en fasant ambes as et en desleueras une et en uiant ensi tu poras ueoir coument tu les elleueras toutes deuant que nulles des rouges pinstissir et leuenteras." As the reader will see, the copy of the text here made is more or less defective; nor have we attempted to supply punctuation. "Celles d'or" and "les rouges" indicate the men of the two different colours—"gold" and "red" being equivalent to the "black" and "white" of our less resplendent days. The text of the second position commences: "Ciste [elsewhere written *ceste*] partiure est de la tieste asouhaidier et celles dor et les rouges sunt ē leur masons cest leur sunt esleuees et ont primiers celles dor .ii. trais en souhaidans;" this same paragraph of the text concludes: "fera buffe de as ensi quil viut et tu enco buffe de as et il ausi... et elleueras buffe de sinnes et le uenkeras." The description of the course of play in the fourth position opens with; "Cis gius est sanlaules" [this

word occurs elsewhere, is it the name of a variety?], that of the fifth problem thus: "Celles dor sunt en leur maison et traient primiers et ne feront onkes fors buffe de as en .iii. des et li rouge ne fera onkes fors buffe de quaernes;" of the eleventh: "Ciste partiure est de *barill* en ii des et vi pour le tieir;" of the twelfth: "Cis gius est de *minoret* en ij des souhaidans," and later on is found the translation of the Latin *perdere ad falsum*, "et li taule dor ne le piert une *ale falle* tu prenderas les rouges," and still further in the same description we read: "tu endescouueras .iij. per ambes as et le tierc et feras...;" of the thirty-fourth: "Chi commencent les partures agieter les des et gieton trois des en ceste parture et uollent celles dor passer et alle toutentour le taulier et reuenir en .a.;" of the forty-third: "Ceste parture est sanlaule (?) a deus deuant le dairaine et est dele tiest." As to the signification of the verb *souhaider* (or *souheidier*) occurring here, Littré hardly defines it very clearly in its backgammon sense. He cites the following early illustration: "On en puet juer [du jeu des tables] en deux manières, c'est a savoir por souhaidier de la langue, et par gieter les dés." It is to be noted that the Fountaine Manuscript gives us few names of backgammon varieties, the principal, if not only ones being *barill* (that is "sbaraill," "baralie" or "sbaraglio"), and *menoret*. Among the technical terms are the usual *buffe des as, buffe de deus, buffe de tiernes, buffe de quaternes, buffe de sines* (*sinnes*); *mosons* (*maisons*); *ambes as; taule; taulier; perdue afalle*; *cinc; quines; elleuer; buffer* (verb) and others.

Here we finish our lamentably insufficient notes on the backgammon portions of some of these remarkable manuscripts, which, with the other analogous ones, not noticed in these pages, form the most splendid literary productions having to do with the history and practice of social games. It is to be hoped that they may all speedily pass through the hands of some investigator having the intelligence and the leisure to thoroughly examine what we have treated so hastily, so scantily and so superficially, and who will be in a position to compare with care each one with every other. We have glanced merely at a few of them, not even including all which are preserved in the libraries of Italy and England, and leaving those contained in the book-collections of France, Spain and Germany virtually unnoticed. It must likewise be remembered that we have given little attention to the parts of these codices devoted to the morris game; that wide field is still unexplored. Even the philological results of systematic researches among these singular memorials of an earlier age would amply repay the student for his labor; and a not unimportant chapter might thereby be added also to the story of mediæval art.

Between the latest of these vellum codices, preserved in the great central libraries of the peninsula, and the earliest printed Italian work relating exclusively or principally to backgammon, we have a period of at least three centuries. The early issue of the peninsular press referred to is a little book, which, although it went through four editions — perhaps more — has now become so rare, in the country which produced it, that scarcely one of the book-collections of Italy possesses a copy. The little work comes from the land's northern provinces, and was written, if we are to judge by the date attached to its preface, in or before the year 1604. It is entitled: " Il nobile et dilettevol givoco del sbaraglino. Dato in luce da M. Mauritio Bartinelli Cittadino da Nouarra. Con alcune nuove regole. □ In

Venetia, M. DC. LXIX. Presso Gio. Pietro Bigonci. — Con licenza de' Superiori, e Priuilegio. Si vende à San Lio." Because of the excessive rarity of the volume, and because there is no adequate description of it in any of the bibliographies, we have transcribed its title-page in full. The edition before us is perhaps the latest one. The vignette after the line *Con alcvne nvove regole,* which is all in capitals, is one of those hard, conventionalized vases of flowers, containing an equally conventionalized rose-bush bearing five blossoms of varying sizes, such as are common enough in Venetian XVIIth century typography. The signatures of the duodecimo volume are two complete ones (A, B), and the numbered pages 41, followed by six unnumbered ones. The reverse of the title-folio is blank, and on the next (third) page begins the "proemio," which is a preliminary and somewhat ornate bit of philosophization on games in general and backgammon in particular, in the course of which, in accordance with the habit of the age, several of the Latin poets are cited, one of them being the "poeta veronese" (Catullus), to say nothing of Galen and Aristotle. The author's comparison between the game he is writing about and other social sports is diverting: we reproduce it in full, forming, as it does, the larger part of the "proemio" (pp. 4-6): "Mà si come è differenza trà huomini nobili, e ignobili, così anco deue esser distintione de' giuochi à loro quasi appropriati, è più à quelli, che à questi congruenti, & anco vn giuoco per sua natura deue maggiore, e minor lode meritare. Galeno prencipe de' Medici lodò assai il giuoco della palla, riguardando al beneficio corporale, che da esso ne segue, & veramente il giuoco di palla è da esser lodato, benchè adesso per la gran poltroneria nata per l'otio ne gli huomini sij questo giuoco non molto in vso, perchè è laborioso, ma perchè non conuiene in ogni tempo, come subito dopo il cibo, nè à donne, nè à vecchi, che pur lor anco hanno bisogno di trastullo honorato, e perchè è commune à fanciulli, e serui, bisogna vedere, se vi è altro giuoco più lodeuole. Piace à molti il giuoco de gli Scacchi, ma contro ogni ragione, essendo quello troppo occupatiuo della mente, e ricercando grandissimo studio, & attentione, talche non merita di essere annouerato trà giuochi, mà più presto frà l'alte occupationi & imbrogli di ceruello. Il giuoco delle carte è strapacciato insino da famigli di stalle, e da ciabatini. Quello de' dadi similmente; ed'è di sola fortuna, nè ha virtù seco mista, laonde non conuiene, nè à nobili, nè à Religiosi, i quali in ogni loro attione deuono hauere la virtù compagna. Gli altri giuochi sono più presto ò pueril, ò donneschi, che altramente; siche vengo a concludere, che solo il giuoco detto Sbaraglino sij perfetto giuoco, e conueniente ad ogni nobile intelletto, primieramente perchè non è giuoco troppo occupatiuo, ma allegro, vario, e pieno di trastullo; dipoi perchè non è di mera fortuna, mà misto d'ingegno, e d'arte, e la fortuna v'è solamente come materia del giuoco, l'arte, & il discorso come forma, e perchè ben disse Aristotile Filosofo, che, *à forma demoniari vnumquodque iustum est;* perciò non si deue questo giuoco dimandar di fortuna, ma d'ingegno, e quindi si può permettere anco a' Religiosi, perche i dadi, che in esso si trouano, e che sono prohibiti da' Sacri Canoni non sono puri dadi, ma solamente come dicono i Logici, *materialiter*, e perchè dalla materia non si giudica assolutamente tale, ma dalla forma più presto come per auttorità d'Aristotile, pur hora abbiamo di sopra accennato, perciò non si deue dire, che quel giuoco sij giuoco de' dadi mà d'arte di condurre in campo aperto vna quantità di tauole, e finalmente

di cauarle innanzi, che l'auuersario caui le sue. Non è anco questo giuoco punto laborioso, perchè s'esercita sedendo, e non è giuoco, con che si possi facilmente ingannare il compagno, perchè è apertissimo, è sbarrato, e perciò si chiama Sbaraglino da quattro campi sbarrati, ch'in esso sono. Si che da tutti questi capi da noi commemorati si può raccorre la dignità, l'honestà, e nobiltà di questo giuoco, dalla quale io sono stato sospinto à fare gli seguenti trattati, e dalla beneuolenza de galant'huomini sarà cortesemente riceuuto il tutto." It will be seen that the condemned games are ball, chess, cards and dice — by the last being meant the casting of dice (" mains "), an affair of pure chance, unmixed with any element of skill. Notable is the statement that " chess pleases many, but without any reason, since it keeps the mind too much occupied, and demands the greatest study and attention, so that it is really not to be reckoned among games but among elevated exercises and bewilderments of the brain."

It is worth while, here, to observe in what ways the writer's favorite game excels all others. After telling us that cards are played by only the lower conditions of men ("by households inhabiting stables and by cobblers"), while the game of dice is not fitting either for the noble or the clerical classes, the author asserts that "Other games" than those he has mentioned "are mostly either puerile or effeminate; therefore I conclude that only the game called *Sbaraglino* is a perfect diversion, adapted to every lofty intellect, firstly because it is not a sport which strains the mental powers, but is cheerful, varied, diverting; nor is it a mere game of chance, but is blended with ingenuity and skill, its turns of fortune to be regarded solely as incentives to play." Then he introduces a bit of ratiocination from Aristotle, aided by which he endeavors to argue that as "this game does not depend so much on chance as cleverness, it may, therefore, be permitted to clerics, because the dice, which are a part of it, are not purely and really dice, such as are prohibited by the sacred canons, but only dice, as the logicians say, *materialiter*, and one does not judge, as Aristotle authoritatively declares, by the mere material form, but by the actual nature. Thus we ought not to say that this is a dice game, but a diversion consisting in the art of conducting into an open field a quantity of men (*tauole*), and finally of pushing them forward (*cauarle innanzi*) as the adversary pushes his. Nor is this game at all laborious, since it is played sitting; and it is not one at which a player easily deceives his opponent, since everything is open and above board (*apertissimo*) and in no wise barred, sealed or concealed (*sbarrato*); hence it is styled *sbaraglino* from the four *unbarred* or free fields, into which the board is divided. From the arguments which we have thus put forward may be deduced the dignity, nobility and honesty of this diversion, by which qualities I have been impelled to compose these essays, and on account of which this book will be kindly and courteously received by all worthy and gentle men." Then follows the date of composition, as we have said, namely, "L'anno 1604, il dì ultimo d'ottobre." The recorded editions—there may have been more—have the dates of Bergamo 1607, Milano 1619, Venetia 1631, all preceding the one lying before us. The public library of Novara possesses that of 1619, but we know not where copies of those of 1607 and 1631 are to be found. Bartinelli was a surgeon of repute, and left behind him a manuscript work containing acute observations on matters connected with his profession, and on certain natural

curiosities. A very brief notice of him is inserted in Lazzaro Agostino Cotta's "Museo novarese" (Milano 1701, p. 232, no. 462).

After the "proemio" succeeds the "trattato primo," commencing with "regola prima" and concluding with regola IX (pp. 7-12). This division embraces little relating to actual play, but much good advice, in a general way, set off by many references to old and modern writers such as Probus, the "poeta Ferrarese," the "poeta Venusino" and others. The player is counselled, first of all, to see that the instruments with which he plays are solid and proper. In "regola III" the writer shows us that he is not altogether in favor of the modern custom of using diceboxes, for which there would seem, as yet, to have been no very distinctive technical term, but inclines to the old method of casting the dice from the hand as more fair—a point to which we have already briefly alluded elsewhere. He treats the subject thus: "È opinione de' moderni giuocatori, che sij cosa sicura in questo giuoco lo adoprare non le semplici mani, ma certi vasetti di legno che chiamano canelli. Questa opiniono hà bisogno di correttione, dico adunque, che i canelli hanno da essere larghi nel fondo, accioche i dadi si possino iui bene riuolgersi, altramente con quello aspetto, che vi si metteranno dentro in quello usciranno, e scoprirassi il punto, e così l'astuto, e scaltrito auuersario si seruirà della sua malitia contro di te; Bisogna anco fare, che l'auuersario scuota, e dimeni i detti canelli, perche alcuni ne hò visti de' giuocatori con destrezza metter i dadi ne' i canelli con fargli pianamente scorrere, ò sdrucciolare giù per il legno, e mostrando di scuotergli non gli scuotere, e così tirare il punto disegnato con riuersare i canelli destramente." In subsequent "rules" we learn that no one should engage in the game "except with a mind calm, serene and cheerful;" that he should never move hastily; that he must have abundance of patience; that he should practice a moderate boldness; and that a man of melancholic or mercurial temperament should never play in the presence of many spectators. He ends with the malicious advice that players giving odds should endeavour to complicate the game, so that they may win of their inexpert opponents ("Chi giuocasse con vno inesperto, dandogli auantaggio, se vorrà più sicuro, che sia possibile, vincer, cerchi di intorbidare, intricare, & imbrogliare il giuoco, perché à ridurre in termini il giuoco trauagliato si ricerca gran maestria, e methodo, che non ha l'inesperto").

The "trattato secondo" (pp. 13-28) offers us 26 "regole." These are intended to be practical counsels, but are often somewhat vague, since they are not illustrated by diagrams. In the first rule, which we translate entire, we have a description of the board, some elementary instruction, and a few lines bearing upon the history of the game: "It being our task to lay down the necessary rules of this game, called *Sbaraglino*, we will first explain its nature. It is practiced, then, usually, upon two attached squares of wood, which may be opened and closed, and these are subdivided into four fields (*campi*), each field having six white points (*segni*) drawn in the shape of half rapiers. There are employed in the game thirty men, fifteen black and fifteen white, placed on the two penultimate points of the second field towards (verso) the third, and he who has the move, or as the Brescians say "the hand" (*la mano*), that is, he who is to play first, has his men on the anterior point; he will also keep one of them on his fourth, with which he can afterwards cover one of the others, placed singly, and

establish a point (*fà casa*) in the third field; *casa* means nothing else than two men, at least, covered or doubled or united on one of the points (*segni*) described. When the men are exposed, that is, when they stand alone—not doubled (*coppiati*) and united—they can be hit by the adversary (*possono toccare delle picchiate dall' auuersario*); then, by the laws of the game, the pieces which have been hit are replaced in the first field, and must thus return afterwards towards the fourth. The game which the Spanish play on the same board (*in questo tauogliero*) is, in form, distinct from this, although the same pieces are used and the same dice; it is called *toccadiglio*. Different also is that in use in the Romagna, which is there styled *minoretto*. But that which is known as *sbaraglio* [*sic*] is in no other wise different from sbaraglino except that in the latter two dice are cast, and a supposed third die is always added to the throw, counting six; but in the former three dice are employed, and no six is computed unless it is included in the throw. The victory in this game consists in having first thrown off (*leuato*) the men from the fourth field after all shall have been brought therein in accordance with the points shown in throwing the dice. To introduce them into the fourth field, passing them through the third, the first rule demanded by the game, and which is always to be observed, even until the game has progressed to its end, is (unless it be contravened by some of the rules hereinafter noted down) that everything shall be covered as far as possible, and that the men shall be guarded from "hits," because, when hit, they are obliged to go back and undertake again a long journey, thus retarding their entrance into the fourth field, and therefore their throwing off—whence may proceed the loss of the game. It is seen from experience that a player with two protected points—not liable to be hit—but hitting the blots of his adversary, having men on four points, will enter first into the fourth field and win the game; therefore everything depends on keeping the points protected." It is from this paragraph that the older Italian lexicographers have drawn their statement that *toccadiglio* is Spanish, when it pretty surely is not, and their explanations of the words *minoretto*, *sbaraglio* and *sbaraglino*. The distinction in the meaning of the two last vocables appears to go back to the XIVth century manuscripts. We have not been able to find that the word *mano* is used at the present time in the district of Brescia in the sense of "move." But there is no doubt that many a ray of light could be thrown on the history of table-games by a careful study of the Italian dialects. It would be interesting for instance, to be able to confirm the Romagna origin of *minoretto*, so often used by the "Civis Bononiæ," himself a citizen of that province.

We will also render literally a portion of "regola II," to give a further idea of the style; "At the beginning of the game one ought to seek to establish some points (*far delle case*), and there should be at least three such protected points, so that then the wider extension of your men may be conveniently carried out. If, therefore, you have the move and throw at the first cast (*di primo lancio*) a three and an ace, you will advance into the third field two men—one to the sixth point, the other to be placed on the corresponding three point. This the ignorant do not do, but hasten to push a single man into the fourth field; this rule is to be observed when you cannot, by your throw, double any of your men. And if, by so extending your men no further than to the third field, you are hit by your adversary,

this matters little at the outset of the game, because the men hit, as they come back, will serve you in doubling or establishing points, and enable you, in return, to hit the blots of your opponent, or to make the top-point (*testa*), called by the Tuscans *capocchia* (the "head" or "top"), being the sixth of the first field, which is a position of much importance in the game, as we state below." We discover another Tuscan term in "regola VII," which says: "If you have the move, and throw, at the first cast, three and two, you should establish the first point in the third field, which is your second, having then the advantage of a man in the rear, rather than seek to establish a point on your fifth, for you would in that case send forward one man less; this first point, as established, is entitled by the Tuscans *procaccina* ("courier," "runner," "carrier"), because it serves as a precursor or aid, to the introduction of men into the fourth field, and likewise helps in the establishment (doubling-up) of points." Again we are told in "regola XX" that "Two men doubled up on the sixth point of the first field are called by some *testa*, by others *capocchia*, as we have remarked above, and form a useful position in the beginning of the game." In the application of these "rules" it must be remembered that, at each throw of the two dice in *sbaraglino*, you are to suppose a third die which always turns up a six; this imagined third die is referred to more than once, as *stando che il sei si computa in ogni tiro* ("seeing that six is to be added to every cast"). We encounter, here and there, various striking words and phrases, technical and otherwise: *pariglia* ("doublet"); *di posta, di bella posta; far un balestro* ("cioè metterne un'altra scoperta su 'l sei tuo del terzo campo, e l'altra dentro contigua, quasi nel quarto campo, e primo segno. Questo si chiama *far balestro*, perchè si mette dirimpeto vna tauola à l'altra"); *far monte di tauole* (placing several men on one point); *così anco guardati non mettere moltitudine di tauole in falso* "perche cosi potrai vincer il giuoco marcio, per la difficoltà ch' hauerà l'auuersario nel scaricare quel monte"); *giocare per l'adietro, giuoco marcio; vincere marcio* (the latter perhaps something like the English "to backgammon"); *non solo è necessario il saper entrare, ma il saper leuar*; *tauola scoperta;* and many others of frequent occurrence.

After these twenty six rules for the advance (*per l'innanzi*), as the author styles them, meaning the style of play when the person addressed is in advance, pushing his men on towards the final "field" or table, we have "regola IX" *per l'adietro* (pp. 29-33), that is, adapted to the player whose men are mostly behind or in the rear, and who must watch very closely the movement of his adversary in the hope of snatching victory from the jaws of defeat. The second of these rules opens thus: "Chi giuoca per l'adietro questo giuoco, e non serra il terzo campo compitamente, perderà il giuoco marcio, per ciò bisogna tener cura d'hauer in modo collocate le tauole, che si possi serrare il detto campo, e frà tanto trattenere tauole dell'auuersario che sono fuori. Sarà anco bene far prima (se sarà possibile) la serrata nel secondo campo, perchè, ò ritardandosi il giuoco, ouero non hauendo tanto campo da mouersi con le tauole fuori, l'auuersario sarà maggiormente constretto à rompere le case dentro nel quarto campo." To these rules succeed eight others being the "trattato quarto," comprising "regole otto del leuare," that is to say for throwing off one's men (pp. 35-39). Interesting is the second of these rules because it alludes to a Latin saying customary among players: "Nel progresso del leuare è molto necessario, che le tauole

non sijno inquartate nelle tre vltime case del quarto campo, che manco è necessario nelle tre superiori, e massime nella prima, perché tu poi far tauola scoperta, se non tirando doi sei ["two sixes"], ouero hauendo da mandar giù di lì vna tauola, e tirando un solo sei, anzi si suol dire da' giuocatori, *Quarta super quartam*, e tanto più *super quintam, & super sextam.* Ma questa regola della quarta, fallisce spesso sù la quarta, meno sù la quinta, e rarissime volte sù la sesta." The end proper of this backgammon treatise is formed by a "complimento dell'avttore" (pp. 40-41), in which we are told that he who wishes to win and not lose his adversary's friendship must not play with friends; and that he who wishes to play without using profane language, or showing brutal behaviour, should be free from avarice and from a too eager desire to conquer, which excellent sentiments are enforced by passages from the Latin poets. The writer concludes by saying: "E queste poche regole habbiamo poste insieme, e distinte con quella breuità, e facilità, che ogn'vno può vedere, perchè il fine nostro è stato di giuocare, e non d'acquistarsi nome di dotto, che se questo fine fusse stato in noi, haueressimo affettata la oscurità del dire, secondo la sentenza di Lucretio,

> Omnia enim stolidi magis admirantur, amantque,
> Inuueris, quæ sub verbis latinantia cernunt."

Below comes "Il fine," showing that the work, in earlier editions, ended here. But now we have an additional section: "Avisi per diffendersi da gl' inganni, che vsano gli cattiui giocatori," filling the last six unnumbered pages. These counsels relate first to methods of deception employed in games of cards; then to modes of cheating in casting dice ("diversi inganni, che fanno con li dadi"), and finally to tricks at the game of *mora*, so common in Italy ("gl' inganni de' giocatori da mora"). The second section of this supplementary chapter — relating to dice — is the only one that can be considered as having any relation to backgammon, and that hardly a direct one.

The sketch given of this almost forgotten tractate is necessarily very imperfect. If the game it treats of ever find a proper historian it will become a source of much information, although it is a matter of some disappointment not to observe more traces of a connection between it and the early Italian manuscripts. Of the names mentioned in those, as applied to various forms of the game, we find only *sbaraglio* (the old *sbarail*), *sbaraglino* (*sbarailin*) and *minoretto*. Some technical terms have apparently been lost, but Bartinelli makes no reference to any preceding treatises. Perhaps the descriptions of positions which he gives in his "regole" may, in some instances, correspond to the *partita* of the manuscripts, but to ascertain this would require much careful comparison. The quaint orthography, the simple, honest manner, the carefully classified matter, the general good sense, set off by some fancifulness, give that charm to the work which so much of the Italian writing of the author's age possesses.

Before coming to the present standing and character of this game in Italy we will take note of some of its appearances in the literature of the peninsula during the last two or three centuries. In the course of the XVIth century we find the word *sbaraglio* (describing the three-dice form) in less common use by general writers than its derivative *sbaraglino* (the title of the variety in which only two dice are employed), showing that a decline of the former method of play had set in, and that the imagined third die, so familiar

in the period covered by the manuscripts, was rapidly going out of fashion. Alessandro Citolini, called "di Seravalle," in his little known work, "La tipocosmia" (Venetia 1561, p. 484), towards the end of the fifth of his seven days (*sette giorni del mondo*), after enumerating various sports, has a following paragraph on dice games. The reader must bear in mind that the author endeavours to cite in his volume the titles of all trades, professions, arts, sciences, philosophies, with the terms appertaining to each of them. He says: "Segvono poi i Givochi di dadi: doue saranno le pise, i dadi, da farina, da tauole, e in essi il 6, il 5, il 4, il 3, il 2, l'asso [the dice numbers], e poi il tauoliere, e i segni svoi, e le tauole; e così givcar a tauole, tirar i dadi, far ambassi, dvini, terni, qvaderni, qvini, dodici [the dice doublets], menar le tauole, far case, lasciar tauole scoperte, dar a le tauole, tornar indietro, givcar di dietro, uincere, dar il givoco marzo [marcio], perdere, gittar uia le tauole, romper il tauoliere; e se uolete le maniere de givochi, uedrete *scarcal' asino*, *toccadilo*, e corto, e lvngo, *sbaraglio*, *sbaraglino*, *camarzo*, *minoretto*, a tre dadi, a sanzo." In the list here given we have both *sbaraglio* and *sbaraglino*. As most of the other games mentioned in the sentence are forms of backgammon it would be interesting to know what the writer means by *camarzo; scarcal' asino*, as we have already noted, is an appellation applied to one of the simpler forms of *merelles;* and as for *sanzo*, it may or may not be an older form of *senza*, referring to varieties played "without" the three dice. *Sbaraglino* we find both in the XVth and XVIth centuries. One of the earliest citations is in a poem by Bronzino (probably identical with the painter, Angelo Allori, called Bronzino, born at Florence 1501). It is in the thirteenth chapter of his "Capitoli faceti" (Venezia 1822):

> Come sare' far razzi e schioppetini
> O giucar da se stesso a *sbaraglino*
> Per non aver a dar noja a vicini.

A more famous comic lyrist, Francesco Berni (b. 1536)—who gave his name to a sort of playful, ludicrous, satirical, flexible, but somewhat licentious verse at one time much read—alludes to the game in the first book ("In lode della primiera"—the last word being apparently the same as "primero," the name of an old English card game), of his "Opere burlesche (Florence 1552-55):

> S' io perdessi a primiera il sangue e gli occhi
> Non me ne curo, doue a *sbaraglino*
> Rinniego 'l ciel, s' io perdo tre baiocchi.

The word is also used by the Catholic historian of the council of Trent, Cardinal Pietro Sforza Pallavicino (b. Rome 1607), in his treatise "Del Bene" (Rome 1644, p. 261); "Non prouiamo noi, che chi giuoca a *sbaraglino*, quando il giuoco è a segno, che non possa egli perdere, se non iscoprendosi due assi ne' dadi, ciò è vna, non d' innumerabili; ma di trentasei congiunzioni possibili, canta già nel cuor suo il trionfo del giuoco?" It is employed, too, by another native of the Italian capital, the littérateur Lorenzo Magalotti (b. 1637), in his "Lettere familiari" (Venezia 1719, I., p. 598)—compared by Hallam to those of Redi—where he gives us a technical term in use at his time: "O non er' egli meglio tirar a vincer il giuoco per l' innanzi (per servirmi d' un termine dello *sbaraglino*) che rimanere apposta in dietro per vincerlo per la cavata, e star a tocca, e non tocca di perderlo marcio?" The

word *sbaraglino* lasted until the end of the XVIIIth century; the poet Bartolommeo Corsini, writing about 1790, gives this counsel in his heroic-comic poem, "Il Torrachione desolato" (Leida= Firenze 1822, I., p. 104, canto IV., 64):

> Quand' ecco il Conte (ch' a temprar l' amare
> Passioni d' amore a un tavolino
> Se ne stava in palagio allor col fare
> Coll' ajo Betto Ciolli a *sbaraglino*)
> Fuori se n' esce ....

Another poet, once eminent but now hardly read, of a somewhat earlier date, either the father, Jacopo Cicognini, or the son, Andrea Giacinto Cicognini—our authority leaves us in doubt which, but both were writers of verse—wrote:

> Lo' mperador ce l' ha poggiate sode
> E non a fatto o dama o *sbaraglino*.

We have commented elsewhere (see p. 187) on the Italian employment of *trictrac*, which, compared with other appellations of the game, may be considered rare. As to the many and variously different significations of the word *trictrac*, we are here not concerned; the poets continued to be familiar with many of them and to use them, as, for instance, Giovanni Batista Fagiuoli (b. 1660), in his "Rime piacevoli" (Florence and Lucca 1729-45, 7 vols):

> Il *tricche tracche* allora si sentiva;
> Ma non è piu quel tempo.

No less a personage than Niccolò Machiavelli, the famous secretary of the Florentine commonwealth, confessed to his overweening fondness for backgammon in one of his "Lettere familiari" ("Opere complete," Florence 1833, p. 827, col. 2), addressed to the ambassador, Francesco Vettori, dated 1513; he says: "Con questi io m' ingaglioffo per tutto dì giocando a cricca, a *trictrac*," the former word, which we have seen before (p. 187), being the title of a game at cards. We have already mentioned an Italian instance of the use of *trictrac* to indicate a variety of backgammon, as early as 1526 (see the phrase just alluded to on p. 187). *Toccadiglio*, as a backgammon appellation, is a word, both as to its origin and exact signification, of the most evasive character. It is said by the German lexicographers to be Italian, and by the Italian to be Spanish. In Italy it is very seldom found in literature, and not very often in the dictionaries. It is, however, at least as old as the early years of the XVIth century. Giovanni Mauro, whose few poetical "Capitoli" are usually published with those of Berni, and who died in 1536, a few days after his friend and compatriot (for both were Tuscans), in his "Capitolo a Ottaviano Solis" (see Berni, edition of Fiorence, 1552, f. 154 b), inquires of the acquaintance whom he addresses what common friends are doing:

> Che fà messer Giouan, che fà l' abate,
> Che fà Vergilio cavalier adorno?
> Ruggier come dispensa le giornate?
> Come fà il maggiordomo a *toccadiglio*?
> Il conte segue anchor le traccie usate?

while in the same century Francesco Bracciolini (b. 1566), in his "Scherno degli Dei," styled by the author in its first issue, 1618, a "poema eroico-

giocoso," has both *toccadiglio* and *sbaraglino* in his lines (edition of Milan, 1804, p. 76, cant. 5., xxviii):

> . . . . vengono e vanno
> Invisibili tutti, e quì vicino
> Giocano a *toccadiglio* o *sbaraglino*.

Baretti, the Anglo-Italian lexicographer of the XVIIIth century, renders both *sbaraglio* and *sbaraglino* by calling each "a kind of play at backgammon," explaining the former as a game "che si fa con tre dadi," and the latter as one "che si fa con due dadi." In the various editions of his dictionary neither *toccadiglio* nor *trictrac* is treated as an Italian word. The former we have not seen in any Italian lexicological work except Giovanni Gherardini's "Supplemento a' vocabularj italiani," which was not issued until the middle of the century just closed (Milan 1852-57, 6 vols); it explains *toccadiglio* as a "giuoco spagnuolesco da tavoliere; forse lo stesso che *sbarraglino* [sic]," and goes on to remark that it is the French "*toute-table* o *toutes-tables;*" but this same dictionary nowhere cites either *sbaraglio* or *sbaraglino*, and the Spanish dictionaries do not give us *toccadiglio* in any orthography. The term *toccadiglio* (or *toccadeglio*) is not at present, we believe, in use anywhere on Italian ground. One verbal definition given by Tommaseo and Bellini may be noted. The French probably acquired from the Italian *casa* their technical word *case*, the former being yet in use in the more Southern land, both for a "point" on the board and for a "point" having on it "doubled" men; as may be seen in the dictionary of the writers just cited, *casa* is said to signify "ciascuno scompartimento del giuoco chiamato *sbaraglino* o *trictrac*," while "*fare una casa*" is given as meaning to "raddoppiare le girelle o tavole," the compilers adding that "adesso il giuoco dello *sbaraglio* si chiama *tavola reale*." Many derivations of *sbaraglino*, all equally improbable, are to be found in the older dictionaries; Gherardini, by his orthography of the word (*sbarraglino*), apparently wishes to imply that it comes from *sbarrare* (itself from *barrare*, to "bar)," meaning to "disbar," "surmount barriers," to "pass bars," referring possibly to the movements of the pieces from one "bar" or point to another, by which we shall be reminded of the English technical term, "bar-point." Even more completely out of use than any of the names of varieties of backgammon we have mentioned is *minoretto*, so common in the period of the early manuscripts, and even at a much later time so well known to Bartinelli.

But backgammon was, at a subsequent day, to find its way to a much more important place in Italian letters. It was to be the subject of a prominent episode in the best known work of the greatest Italian poet of the eighteenth century, for his only possible rival to such a claim, Metastasio, is to be considered rather a dramatist than a lyrist. Giuseppe Parini died almost with the century (1799). He was the first Italian poetical writer who came under that English influence which had so effectively reached Germany through Lessing. In 1763 Italy, then lying in a drowsy slumber, was startled from its languor by the appearance of the first part of Giuseppe Parini's poem "Il giorno," the scheme of which, we are told by an English critic, was drawn from Thomson, while its spirit was the spirit of Pope, the result being a production such as Cowper might have composed had he been born an Italian. It is a masterpiece of delicate and pointed irony. It describes

the dawdling, dilettante life of higher Italian society in that dull age, when there was neither political, commercial, military nor literary activity, when no national feeling existed and when even the church slept. It portrays the events of a day in the fruitless life of a young man of the gentry, and is divided into four parts: "Il mattino" (morning), "Il meriggio" (noon), "Il vespro" (evening), and "La notte" (night). The second part ("Il meriggio" or "Il mezzogiorno") was published in 1765. At its end was a description of a contest at backgammon, which at once became the classical utterance concerning the game. The guests at a country-house, the noon-meal finished, retired to the drawing-room for coffee, after which some of the party went out driving, and, as Carducci in his summary of the poem expresses it: "Gli altri giuocano a diversi giuochi, essi a *sbaraglino.*" Then follows a detailed description of the *sbaraglino* game, the original of which we quote in full. The reader will notice the introduction, still common in Parini's day, of the old mythological machinery, and will see from the last lines that the author shared the belief in the derivation of the word *trictrac* from the noise made by the shaken dice. The text given is the carefully revised one of the historian and critic Cesare Cantù, in his admirable work, "L'abate Parini o la Lombardia nel secolo passato (Milan 1854, pp. 405-408). The passage embraces lines 1103-1190 of the poem:

Così a queste, o Signore illustre, inganno
Ore lente si faccia. E s'altri ancora
Vuole Amor che s'inganni, altrove pugni
La turba convitata: e tu da un lato
Sol con la Dama tua quel gioco eleggi
Che due soltanto a un tavoliere ammette.
Già per ninfa gentil tacito ardea
D'insoffribile ardor misero amante,
Cui null'altra eloquenza usar con lei,
Fuor che quella degli occhi, era concesso;
Poichè il rozzo marito, ad Argo eguale,
Vigilava mai sempre; e quasi biscia
Ora piegando, or allungando il collo,
Ad ogni verbo con gli orecchi acuti
Era presente. Oime! come con cenni,
O con notate tavole giammai,
O con servi sedotti a la sua bella
Chieder pace ed aita? Ogni d'amore
Stratagemma finissimo vincea
La gelosia del rustico marito.
Che più lice sperare? Al tempio ei viene
Del nume accorto che le serpi intreccia
All'aurea verga, e il capo e la calcagna
D'ali fornisce. A lui si prostra umile
E in questi detti, lagrimando, il prega:
"O propizio a gli amanti, o buon figliuolo
"De la candida Maja, o tu che d'Argo
"Deludesti i cent'occhi, e a lui rapisti
"La guardata giovenca, i preghi accogli
"D'un amante infelice, e a lui concedi,
"Se non gli occhi, ingannar gli orecchi almeno
"D'importuno marito." Ecco, si scote
Il divin simulacro, a lui si china,
Con la verga pacifica la fronte
Gli percote tre volte; e il lieto amante
Sente dettarsi ne la mente un gioco

Che i mariti assordisce. A lui diresti
Che l' ali del suo piè concesse ancora
Il supplicato Dio; cotanto ei vola
Velocissimamente a la sua donna.
La bipartita tavola prepara,
Ov' ebano ed avorio intarsiati
Regnan sul piano; e partono alternando
In due volte sei case ambe le sponde.
Quindici nere d' ebano rotelle,
E d' avorio bianchissimo altrettante
Stan divise in due parti, e moto e norma
Da duo dadi gettati attendon, pronte
Gli spazj ad occupar, e quinci e quindi
l'ugnar contrarie. Oh cara a la Fortuna
Quella che corre innanzi all' altre, e seco
Trae la compagna, onde il nemico assalto
Forte sostenga! Oh giocator felice
Chi pria l' estrema casa occupa; e l' altro
De gli spazj a sè dati ordin riempie
Con doppio segno! Ei trionfante allora
Da la falange il suo rival combatte;
E in proprio ben rivolge i colpi ostili.
Al tavolier s' assidono ambidue,
L' amante cupidissimo e la ninfa:
Quella una sponda ingombra e questi l' altra.
Il marito col gomito s' appoggia
All' un de' lati: ambo gli orecchi tende;
E sotto al tavolier di quando in quando
Guata con gli occhi. Or l' agitar de i dadi
Entro a sonanti bossoli comincia;
Ora il picchiar de' bossoli sul piano;
Ora il vibrar, lo sparpagliar, l' urtare,
Il cozzar de i duo dadi; or de le mosse
Pedine il martellar. Torcesi e freme
Sbalordito il geloso: a fuggir pensa,
Ma rattienlo il sospetto. Il fragor cresce,
Il rombazzo, il frastono, il rovinio.
Ei più regger non puote; in piedi balza,
E con ambe le man tura gli orecchi.
Tu vincesti, o Mercurio: il cauto amante
Poco disse, e la bella intese assai.
Tal ne la ferrea età, quando gli sposi
Folle superstizion chiamava all' arme,
Giocato fu. Ma poi che l' aureo surse
Secol di novo, e che del prisco errore
Si spogliaro i mariti, al sol diletto
La dama e il cavalier volsero il gioco,
Che la necessità trovato avea.
Fu superfluo il romor: di molle panno
La tavola vestissi, e de' patenti
Bossoli 'l sen: lo schiamazzio molesto
Tal rintuzzossi; e dura al gioco il nome
Che ancor l' antico strepito dinota.

Cantu's principal note (pp. 106-107) is of interest, because it is the earliest and fullest attempt at a historical sketch of backgammon, written in Italian, down to the middle of the XIXth century — and it has not been greatly improved on since — although it naturally leaves much to be desired. The chess anecdote of Saccheri at its end is, of course, out of place, but in Parini's time people still fancied that all table games must be more or less related to each other: "È lo *sparaglino* [sic], uno dei diversi giuochi delle

tavole. Il tavoliere è doppio, compartito in piramidi bianche e nere, e vi si giuoca con quindici pedine nere, e quindici bianche, due dadi, due bossoli. Ciascun giocatore impila le sue pedine al vertice della prima piramide: in uno dei bossoli scuote i due dadi, e li lancia contro la sponda dell'avversario: secondo che i dadi fanno pariglio o no, si regola la mossa della pedina. I numeri eguali fanno andare da freccia bianca in bianca; o da nera in nera: i caffi da freccia nera in bianca o viceversa. L'intento è di occupar l'estremità, ove si fa damare [!] la propria pedina, per poter poi assalire l'avversario nelle sue case. Dal fracasso che doveano fare pedine, bossoli, dadi fu questo giuoco chiamato il *Trictrac;* dal quale poco differisce il *Tac.* Nè voglio nè devo insegnarvi a giocare; e molti ponno aver veduto a giocarlo; giacchè, sebben raro, non è disusato, singolarmente in Francia, ove un proverbio dice che il *trictrac* non imparano le donne che dai loro amanti, nè gli uomini che dalle amiche. Chi ne volesse conoscere le teoriche, guardi l'*Encyclopédie methodique, jeux, trictrac.* Prospero Merimée, uno dei romanzieri più rinomati di Francia, pubblicò un racconto *La partita di trictrac.* Delille, nell'*Homme des champs*, ha una lunga descrizione d'una partita a *trictrac.* Platone diceva che il mondo è simile allo *sbaraglino:* si comincia dal gettar casuale del dado; poi il giudizio dispone le mosse. Tutto questo brano sembra al De Coureil una puerilità, una pedanteria, un'affettata erudizione di scolastiche cognizioni, e trova singolarmente ridicolo che un moderno Zerbino ricorra a Mercurio per ajuto. Ma chi gli ha detto che questo trovato fosse moderno? Platone attribuisce l'invenzione de' giuochi di zara appunto a Mercurio Trismegisto. I Greci avevano il *diagrammismo* e i Romani le *duodena scripta*, che somigliava ben bene al nostro *trictrac.* Gli *Annali persiani* lo fanno antico quanto gli scacchi. Perocchè raccontano che, durata lunga guerra fra Belagi, re d'India, e Nuscirvan re di Persia, quegli per finirla alla quieta mandò al Persiano un giuoco di scacchi, promettendo pagar un tributo se i Persiani, nessuno insegnandolo, scoprissero l'arte di questo giuoco. Raccolgonsi i sapienti del regno: Bonzurgemhir [Burzurgmīhr] arriva a discoprire i misteri degli scacchi; è per mostrar che i Persiani non solo ne sapevano del pari ma più che gl'Indiani, inventò il *trictrac:* inviato dal suo re, porta all'Indiano sì la spiegazione degli scacchi, sì la sfida a conoscere il nuovo giuoco. La sapienza di tutti i dotti dell'India riuscì vana, e Belagi pagò il tributo (*Annales de la litérature et des arts*, tom. IX, pag. 84). Il padre Girolamo Saccheri, gesuita, professore di matematica a Pavia, fra altri ammirati esercizj di memoria, faceva questo di giocare a tre scacchieri contemporaneamente e senza vederli; e il più delle volte vinceva: poi, se piacesse, ritesseva a memoria tutte le mosse." What Cantù calls "il Tac" is, doubtless, *toccadiglio; tac*, however, is not discoverable, so far as we know, in any Italian dictionary, at any rate not as a name of a game. In more than one place, in his note, Cantù makes evident his ignorance of table-games; the word *damare* (to "queen"), for instance, is not appropriate in connection with backgammon, but is used only in relation to chess and draughts.

There is a more recent edition of "Il giorno e le odi" of Parini (Turin, 1899) by Luigi Valmaggi, a Turinese university professor. We copy his longer note (pp. 136-139) on the same passage of Parini's poem, in spite of the fact that its matter is largely drawn partly from Cantù and partly from the cyclopedias. Some portions of it, nevertheless, will be new to many

readers; this is especially true of the concluding lines, It is a pity that the compiler of the note could not have given us a trustworthy account of the present state of backgammon and its varieties in the different provinces of Italy, together with some notices of the terminology of the game now or lately in vogue in the extensive field which stretches between Southwestern Sicily and Friuli: "Descrizione del tric-trac; e il nome, che 'ancor l'antico strepito dinota,' a punto venne dal rumore che facevano, nel giuoco, bossoli, dadi e pedine. Ma, buon documento della ciarlataneria etimologica d'una erudizione che oramai dovrebb'essere vecchia, non mancò chi s'avvisasse di nobilitarne l'origine recapitando la derivazione del nome al greco τρὶς τραχύς, che vorrebbe dire "trois fois difficile à jouer et à comprendre" (!), com'è riferito da Giovanni Quinola nella sua *Nouvelle Académie des jeux* (Parigi, 1883, p. 284). Il tric-trac si giuoca (in Francia è in uso anche oggi) sopra un tavoliere, diviso longitudinalmente in due campi, e compartito da ventiquattro frecce a due colori, dodici per parte, parallele alla divisione longitudinale dello scacchiere (*partono alternando in dodici magioni ambe le sponde*, v. 1149 sg.). De' due giuocatori ciascuno dispone di quindici *girelle*, pedine, o *rotelle*, com'è corretto nelle varianti di mano del P., rispettivamente bianche e nere, ammassate da principio in tre pile su la prima freccia di destra. Dal getto dei dadi, che devono essere lanciati contro *la sponda* (*bande* nella nomenclatura francese tuttavia in corso) avversaria, dipendono tanto la qualità della mossa, di una o due pedine o su l'una o l'altra freccia, secondo la combinazione dei punti formati dai dadi, quanto la direzione di essa, secondo il numero totale è pari (*simples*), di freccia bianca in bianca, o dispari (*doublets*), di bianca in nera e viceversa. Ordine e fondamento al giuoco i 'piani' (*jans*) otto in tutto, conforme al diverso modo come le pedine si movono e sono *abbattues;* e segnano i punti vinti, che si notano sino a dodici, con due gettoni variamente disposti intorno alle frecce (due punti avanti la prima freccia di destra; quattro tra la terza e la quarta, ecc.). Dodici punti dànno un *trou*, che si rappresenta infilando progressivamente una stecca nei buchi onde son fornite le sponde del tavoliere; dodici *trous* dànno la partita. — Il giuoco è antichissimo, e lo troviamo già in Persia descritto nel *Libro dei re* di Firdusi (vol. VII, pp. 228-237 della traduz. italiana di I. Pizzi, Torino, 1888), il quale ne attribuisce l'invenzione al savio Buzuremîhr. Lo vediam poi diffusissimo nell'antichità classica: probabilmente è la πεττεία dei Greci (cfr. Esichio, II, p. 945), senza dubbio il *ludus duodecim scriptorum* dei Romani, che si giocava sopra un tavoliere (*alveus* o *tabula*) sul quale erano tracciate dodici linee (*scripta*, di qui il nome) tagliate da una perpendicolare in modo di formare 24 compartimenti. Su queste linee si movevano le pedine (*calculi*) a due colori, secondo il punto formato dai dadi, lanciati sul tavoliere mediante un bossolo (*pyrgus* o *fritillus*), con tutte le regole del tric-trac. Oltre due epigramme dell'*Antologia latina* (192-193, Riese) e qualche altro cenno di scrittori latini (v. Ter. *Adelph*, 739 sg.; Cic. in Non. s. v. *scriptat*, p. 170, 28; Ov. *Trist.*, II., 476; *Ars. am.*, II., 204, Quint., XI., 2, 28; Plin., *N. H.*, XXXVII., 6, 2), è importantissimo documento del giuoco il celebre epigramma di Agathias (*Ant. Gr.*, III., 62, Jacobs), dove si descrive una partita dell'imperatore Zenone (Marquardt, *Privatl. d. Röm.*, 2ª ed., 834 sgg.); i materiali però son poco su poco giù quelli stessi raccolti, e discussi già dal Salmasio (in *Script. hist. Aug.*, e dal De Paw, *De alea veter. ad epigr. Agath.*, Traj, ad Rhen., 1726). Dal Salmasio (p. 467), dal

Jacobs (p. 101) e ancora dal Becq de Fouquières (*Les jeux des anciens*, 2ª ed. (Parigi, 1873), p. 372) fu riprodotta di su la silloge di Grutero (*Inscript ant.*, II., 1049) una tavola rappresentante il giuoco; ma è apocrifa, come provò chiaramente già il Ficoroni (*I tali ed altri strumenti lusori degli antichi romani descriti* (Roma, 1734) p. 102 sg.). Ancora ritroviamo il tric-trac nel medio evo, ov' era designato col nome di *alea*, divenuto sinonimo di *tabula*, la qual parola non significò più lo scacchiere, bensì la pedina, e lo scacchiere si chiamò invece *tabolerium* (L. Zdekauer, *Il giuoco in Italia nei secoli XIII e XIV*, in *Arch. stor. ital.*, s. 4ª, XVIII. (1886), p. 20 segg.). Non è rara negli statuti la disposizione che si debba giuocare con trenta tavole, e ciò affine d' impedire 'che le pedine si mettessero in apparenza all' orlo del tavoliere, per gettare i dadi, in mezzo di loro a zara' (Zdekauer, l. cit., p. 27, n. 1.). Quanto alla confusione de' termini, essa perdurò sino alla fine del medio evo (ancora è nel Petrarca: v. il XXVI ragionamento *De ludo aleae et calculorum* del *De remediis utriusque fortunae*), e più in qua, sino al Rinascimento; il merito d' averla tolta di mezzo spetta per primo a Celio Calcagnini, nella dissertazione *De talorum, tesserarum et calculorum ludis* (in *Opp.* (Basilea, 1544), pp. 286-301). Ma non mai forse il giuoco ebbe così grande diffusione e voga come nella seconda metà del secolò scorso. Nella *Nouvelle Académie des jeux*, ristampata ad Amsterdam nel 1773, è detto in proposito che 'l'excellence, la beauté et la sincerité qui se rencontrent dans ce jeu, font que le beau monde qui a de la politesse s'y applique avec beaucoup de soin, en fait son jeu favori, et le préfère aux autres jeux. En effet, ce beau jeu a tant de noblesse et de distinction, que nous voyons qu'il est plus à la mode que jamais; les dames principalement y ont une très grande attache' (II., 31 sg). Non è a meravigliare perciò se nella teoria del giuoco troviamo che hanno luogo delle regole galanti di questa fatta: 'L'on pratique... à présent que celui qui joue contre les dames, leur donne les tables ou dames noires, parce que le noir de l'ebene relève et fait paroître davantage la blancheur de leurs mains, ce que leur fait plaisir (ib. p. 33).' Dall'anonimo autore della stessa opera è anche referita certa *Chanson du trictrac*, nella quale la scurrilità è sì grande e il doppio senso sì grossolano, che non si potrà riprodurne altro che i primi versi:

Galans, je veux vous apprendre,
Sans Livre et sans Almanach,
Un jeu facile a comprendre,
Un nouveau jeu de Trictrac:
Il faut, en suivant la chance,
Mettre les Dames ....

Il C[antù] ricorda un proverbio francese, secondo il quale il tric-trac non impararono le donne se non dagli amanti, nè gli uomini se non dalle amiche. Nell'*Homme de Ville* [Champs] del Delille (1738-1813) è una lunga descrizione d'una partita a tric-trac; [161] e un romanzo sullo stesso argomento scrisse

[161] This metrical description of a *partie* of backgammon is like that of Parini, and possibly suggested by it, and is the most notable which occurs in French literature. It is to be found in "L'Homme des champs" by the abbé Jacques Delille (see his works, Paris 1824, VII., pp. 220-221) and is very brief. Valmaggi, as the reader will notice, makes the singular blunder of styling this once widely-read poem "L'Homme de ville" — an inexplicable lapse of the pen. We cite the passage in its completeness:

Le ciel devient-il sombre? Eh bien! dans ce salon,
Près d'un chêne brulant j'insulte à l'aquilon;
Dans cette chaude enceinte, avec gout eclairée,

Prosper Merimée (1803-1870); entrambi anche citate dal C[antù]." Much of this will be found, in a somewhat fuller shape, in other pages of the present work. The citations in regard to the line-games of the ancients show that the commentator did not know the little publication of Professor Comparetti, of

> Mille heureux passe-temps abregent la soirée.
> J'entends ce jeu bruyant où, le cornet en main,
> L'adroit joueur calcule un hasard incertain.
> Chacun sur le damier fixe d'un œil avide
> Les cases, les couleurs, et le plein et le vide:
> Les disques noirs et blancs volent du blanc au noir;
> Leur pile croît, decroît. l'ar la crainte et l'espoir
> Battu, chassé, repris de sa prison sonore
> Le dé, non sans fracas, part, rentre, part encore;
> Il court, roule, s'abat; le nombre a prononcé.

In the poem from which we are quoting, these lines are immediately succeeded by a description, of equal length, of a game of chess. The abbé Delille published "L'Homme des champs" in 1800. He, like Parini, was greatly influenced by his familiarity with English letters. Residing for the better part of two years in England, he translated into French Milton's "Paradise Lost," Pope's "Essay on Man" and several shorter pieces. He somewhat resembled the Italian lyrist in *esprit*, and in the ease and harmony of his verse, but he has long ceased to enjoy the popularity and vogue which were once his. It is proper to mention that Parini's poem has been rendered in its complete form into French under the title of "Le jour, poëme en quatre parties, traduit en vers francais par I. L. A. Reymond" (Paris 1826). — The scurrilous piece of verse, of which the first lines are reproduced by Valmaggi, has been set to music, and is inserted in many collections of French songs. — The other French production which has to do with our game, likewise mentioned by the Italian commentators, is the story by Prosper Merimée, "Le partie de trictrac" (1830), contained in his often reprinted and widely translated collection of tales entitled "Colomba." The edition we have used is that of Paris 1889, in which the narrative fills pp. 312-330. It is the tale of a young French lieutenant of the navy, who, after losing a good deal of money in gaming, yields, in his despair, to the temptation of cheating, at trictrac, his opponent, a lieutenant in the Dutch service. Of the two it is said: "Bref, pendant plusieurs jours ils se donnèrent rendezvous, soit au café, soit a bord, essayant toutes sortes de jeux, surtout le trictrac, et augmentant toujours leurs paris, si bien qu'ils en vinrent a jouer vingt-cinq napoleons la partie." The Frenchman is finally reduced to his last twenty-five napoléons. The concise description of the culminating point of the contest is as follows: — "Bientôt Roger fut reduit à jouer les derniers vingt-cinq napoléons. Il s'appliquait horriblement; aussi la partie fut-elle longue et disputée. Il vint un moment ou Roger, tenant le cornet, n'avait plus qu'une chance pour gagner: je crois qu'il lui fallait six-quatre. La nuit etait avancée. Un officier qui les avait longtemps regardés jouer avait fini par s'endormir sur un fauteuil. Le Hollandais était fatigué et assoupi; en outre, il avait bu beaucoup de punch. Roger seul était bien éveillé, et en proie au plus violent desespoir. Ce fut en fremissant qu'il jeta les dés. Il les jeta si rudement sur le damier, que de la secousse une bougie tomba sur le plancher. Le Hollandais tourna la tete d'abord vers la bougie, qui venait de couvrir de cire son pantalon neuf, puis il regarda les dés. — Ils marquaient six et quatre. Roger, pâle comme la mort, reçut les vingt-cinq napoléons. Ils continuerent a jouer. La chance devint favorable a mon malheureux ami, qui pour tant faisait écoles sur écoles, et qui casait comme s'il avait voulut perdre. Le lieutenant hollandais s'enteta, doubla, decoupla les enjeux: il perdit toujours. Je crois le voir encore, c'était un grand blond, flegmatique, dont la figure semblait être de cire. Il se leva enfin, ayant perdu quarante mille francs, qu'il paya sans que sa physionomie décelât la moindre émotion. Roger lui dit: "Ce que nous avons fait ce soir ne signifie rien, vous dormiez à moitié; je ne veux pas de votre argent." — "Vous plaisantez," repondit le flegmatique Hollandais; "j'ai tres-bien joué, mais les dés ont été contre moi. Je suis sur de pouvoir toujours vous gagner en vous rendant quatre trous. Bonsoir!" et il le quitta. Le lendemain nous apprîmes que, désespéré de sa perte, il s'était brûlé la cervelle dans sa chambre après avoir bu un bol de punch." Struck with horror at the suicide of his opponent, Roger is maddened by remorse, tells his two most intimate friends that he had won by cheating, and prepares to put an end to his own life likewise. They persuade him to live, but soon afterwards, in a naval combat, his purposed foolhardiness results in his death.

which we have given an account (see pp. 122 and 174-5). Unsatisfactory as it is, Professor Valmaggi's note is still useful for its references to authorities, and makes an addition or two to our bibliographical note on Greek and Latin games (pp. 121-2).

There is an English prose rendering, or rather paraphrase of "Il giorno," published anonymously, but really the work of Lady Elisabeth Berkeley, who became by her first marriage Lady Craven, and by her second Margravine of Anspach (1750-1828), a figure of European note in her day. She was a woman of considerable learning, and printed privately some poems of Petrarch besides other compositions of her own, and was the patron and friend of Ugo Foscolo, whose English "Essays on Petrarch" she issued in a handsome but very limited edition (sixteen copies) before it was given to the general public. Her version of Parini's poem is entitled "A fashionable day" (London 1780), and was dedicated to the translator's brother. It gives but a faint idea of the beauty of its original. We cite the portion describing the game (pp. 105-113): "It only now remains to perform the sacred rites of the god of gaming, who is always ready to cheat his votaries of their money and their time. The god himself provides the combatants with arms, and arranges them in different parties of foot and of horse. Propitious ever to thy prayers, for thee he orders to be set apart a table, whose narrow lists will admit but two warriors. Love smiles with triumph as he explains to thee the most ingenious stratagem which was ever practised by any of his subjects in all his wars with Hymen. Long had an unsuccessful soldier of Love been the prey of a consuming fire lighted in his bosom by the hand of a child of Beauty and of Hymen. The languishing looks of Tenderness were the sole interpreters of his passion. With difficulty could they deceive the vigilance of a husband, who never closed his eyes, and who, at the smallest noise, erected the long ears of attention. Alas! not a slave could the unhappy lover gain over to his interest, not the smallest billet could his despair convey to her. Wherever he goes, this monster blasts his sight. At last he flies to the altar of that benevolent god, whose hand is armed with a caduceus, whose head and feet are ornamented with wings. To his holy statue he does the lowest homage. With streaming eyes and upheld hands, 'Oh thou son of Maia,' he exclaims, 'thou deignest to listen to the prayers of Love—thou who deceivedst Argus with his hundred eyes—teach me to deceive, if not the eyes of this too watchful husband, at least his ears!' The statue smiles on his request. He perceives the magic caduceus three times touch his forehead. In an instant his inspired Fancy distinctly represents to him the mystery of this new game so calculated to stun and weary out the most attentive husbands. The happy lover darts away, as if Mercury had lent him his wings. Already he is at the side of his mistress.—Mindful of the commands of the Deity, he procures a board of scented wood, whereof he raises the sides, and which he divides by a wall into two equal plains. The colour of these plains is black. Like the battalions of the red rose and the white rose, fifteen dames assembled on either side, these of a splendid whiteness, those black as ebony, wait, in order to begin their march, until two dice shall issue from a box of thunder. Happy she, who has not, by advancing alone, exposed herself to the danger of being cut off and taken prisoner! A companion is here of service, in order to assist in supporting the enemy's shock. The busy dice soon increase the

number of the combatants. Already I behold the milk-white amazons forming, two by two, the close-wedged phalanx, and boldly charging the adverse army. The adverse army advances with a more confused march; while they who expose themselves to imprudent dangers, experience different checks which Victory is careful to record. Sometimes an ill-aimed stroke recoils upon her who too inconsiderately pursued her adversary.—Fortune favours the white warriors, of whom the enemy of Hymen is generalissimo. It should seem that their adversaries, commanded by the queen of Hymen, desired to be defeated. The astonished husband attentively observes this new-invented just [joust]. It strikes him that it is not without its danger, between two warriors who approach to too close quarters. Sometimes, his elbow rested on the field of battle, he listens with the ear of attention—sometimes, he rolls the eyes of jealousy over the plains of combat—each time the martial throats of the tubes thunder with double fury. Fear obliges him to retreat, suspicion again brings him back to his stand of observation. The combat rages, the din of the battle brays. Victory hangs upon the next stroke. The conquering tube redoubles its thunder and thinks it can never make sufficient noise. Its adversary, mad at the scorns of fortune, vomits out the dice with a noise which disturbs the pleasures of Jupiter, and makes old Pluto tremble. The jealous husband, at length subdued, is driven from the plain, stopping his ears, and cursing such a noisy game.—Mercury, the day is thine. The disciple whispers half a word to his mistress, who comprehends his meaning. Such was this game in the days of barbarity, when false ideas of honour continually disturb'd suspicious husbands. But, since the Golden Age is again return'd upon earth, since husbands are become officious and convenient friends, the lover and his mistress have only applied to this game for an agreeable amusement. In order to prevent that noise, which is now no longer useful, the peaceable tubes are form'd of silent leather, and the dice dispose themselves without tumult upon the down-soft green. The game has preserv'd nothing noisy but its name, which still continues *Tric-trac*."

Of the printed works which have succeeded to that of Bartinelli, the first one familiar to us—though there are doubtless some intervening ones—is the anonymous: "Trattato teorico-pratico dei giuochi" (Macerata 1832), a small volume of 164 pages, with a single copperplate, representing the backgammon-board and men. The game is here called *giacchetto*, which is doubtless the French *jacquet* italianized. But the method of play, as described, corresponds to the French *revertier* rather than to *jacquet*. The section devoted to this form of *trictrac* occupies pp. 139-164, closing the work. It opens with a brief introduction (pp. 139-143) giving the compiler's summary of the game's history, which, despite the repetitions involved, we here transcribe, inserting the few foot-notes in the text in their proper places: "Il *giachetto* è una sorta di giuoco di commercio più prossima a quelli di azzardo, che si effettua sopra un tavoliere, per cui è della specie dei giuochi di tavola, e ha luogo fra due persone le quali si situano rapporto al detto tavoliere l'una incontro all'altra in A ed in B [referring to the copperplate at the end of the book]. Questo giuoco considerato come *trictrac* (*sbaraglino*, col qual nome si esprime il suo antico e più bel modo

di giuocarlo) ha secondo alcuni la sua etimologia nelle parole greche τρὶς τραχύς, *tre volte difficile*, e secondo altri per onomatopea nella imitazione dello strepito che produce quando si giuoca, e di questa opinione furono Egidio Menagio ('Dictionnaire etymologique de la langue française,' art. *trictrac*), de Furetière ('Dictionnaire françois'), de Pasquier, Parini ('Il giorno'), Antonini ('Dictionnaire françois, latin et italien,' art. *onomatopée*), ed altri. Le ricerche che si sono fatte intorno all'antichità di questo giuoco non sono molto precise; ma almeno se ne può concludere che la data della sua origine si perde nel buio de' tempi. Ciò viene anche confermato dalla considerazione che i giuochi di azzardo in genere sono antichissimi, mentre la loro invenzione è da Platone attribuita ad una divinità egizia per nome Theuth (Platone nel 'Fedro' tom. III., p. 274). [Alcuni sull'autorità di lui l'attribuiscono al famoso Ermete ossia Mercurio Trismegisto, filosofo egizio, il quale fioriva verso l'anno 1900 avanti l'era cristiana; noi peraltro non abbiamo potuto verificare un tal passo, il quale sarebbe in contradizione con quello da noi riportato ('Encyclopédie,' p. 102)], e dall'altra considerazione che la maggior parte di tali giuochi si effettuava con i dadi, [L'origine de' dadi è antichissima, ma essi da principio erano segnati in quattro superficie soltanto, essendo le altre due ritondate in cono, 'Dizionario de'costumi,' art. *dado*, e Facciolati, 'Calepinus,' art. *tessera*. Omero medesimo, 'Odissea' lib. I., ne fa menzione; e Sofocle nel 'Palamede;' Pausania, 'Descriptio Graeciae,' lib. II., cap. XX., e lib. X., cap. XXXI.; Suida, 'Lexicon Græcum,' art. παλαμηδης, e Isacio Porfirogeneta, richiamo le sue stesse parole: ο Παλαμηδης φρονιμος, ενπαιδευτος, πολυβουλος, μεγαλοψυχος, ὠδε πρῶτον το ταυλιζειν ητοι κυβενειν εξευρηται (cioè *Palamede provvido, ben erudito, di gran consiglio, magnanimo, così per il primo trovò il tavoliere o sia il giuocare a dadi*) ne attribuiscono l'invenzione a Palamede. Erodoto, 'Historiarum,' lib. I., cap. 94, la riferisce ai Lidii che egli fa autori di tutti i giuochi di azzardo; e con esso concordano Virgilio Polidoro, 'De rer. invent.,' lib. II., cap. XIII.; il 'Breviario storico,' pag. 34; ed Alessandro Sardo, 'De rer. invent.' lib. II., p. 734, ma quest'ultimo altrove, lib. I., p. 714, l'attribuisce a Palamede, secondo l'opinione dei primi che abbiamo nominato. Finalmente Platone ne fa inventore il sopradetto Theuth (loc. cit.)], dei quali si servono i Greci e i Romani per indovinare, ovvero per semplice divertimento. [Gli uomini stessi giuocavano qualche volta perfino cogli Dei: ed è curioso ciò che Plutarco riferisce nella vita di Romolo, che il custode del tempio di Ercole prese i dadi e giuocò con lo Dio, a condizione che se egli vinceva ne avrebbe ottenuto qualche segnalato favore, e se egli perdeva avrebbe donato al figlio d'Alcmena una bella ragazza]. Ora il *trictrac* nella sua prima maniera di giuocarsi apparteneva ai giuochi di azzardo, e siccome di quelli effettuati co' dadi è quasi l'unico che noi conosciamo, può congetturarsi che esso abbia avuto origine in quei remotissimi tempi. Anzi secondo il Barbeyrac ('Traité du jeu,' lib. III., chap. VIII. & VI.). Platone stesso sembra che parli di esso quando ci dà la descrizione di un giuoco degli antichi che ne ha tutte le apparenze ('De Repub.,' lib. II., pag. 374, c., tom. II., ed. Steph.). Per altro questo giuoco apparirà sempre molto antico quando anche si vogliano soltanto considerare le conoscenze più sicure che si abbiano intorno ad esso. L'ab. Barthelemy, nel suo viaggio di Anacarsi, dice che era noto in Atene; ed Agathia lo descrive nel suo epigramma sopra il re Zenone che trovasi nell'Antologia. Vi hanno tuttavia di coloro che dubitano se Agathia abbia voluto

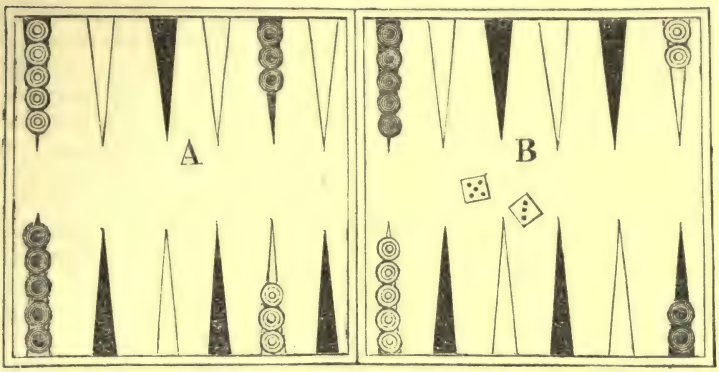
parlare del *trictrac* e credono che gli antichi lo abbiano ignorato: ma questa opinione viene contradetta dal testimonio dei romani i quali certamente lo conoscevano; e sapendosi che essi tenevano quasi tutti i loro usi dai greci, è pressochè indubitato che questo giuoco era cognitissimo in Grecia, dove fu recato probabilmente dai Fenicii. Questi ultimi pertanto, come pensa l'autore del 'Dictionnaire des jeux,' art. *trictrac*, ne furono forse gl'inventori, a meno che lo avessero ricevuto ancora da più lungi, sia dall'Egitto o dall'India. Non dobbiamo peraltro omettere l'opinione dell'Arabo, al-Safadi, il quale ne fa inventore un re di Persia ('Encyclopedie amusem.' art. *aritmetique* e 'Dizionario della ricreazione,' tom. II., p. 94), e noteremo ancora in conferma di questa opinione che i Persi mandarono il giuoco del *trictrac* agli Indiani avendone ricevuto in contracambio quello degli scacchi: il che può vedersi in Hyde ('Mandragoras,' p. 42), in Menocchio ('Le stuore,' tom. III., cap. 84), ed in Verci, 'Lettere sui scacchi,' p. 26. [I Francesi e gli Alemanni si disputarono un tempo la gloria dell'invenzione di questo giuoco, 'Academie des jeux,' ediz. II., art. *trictrac*, ma ciò al più si può intendere di qualche sua ultima modificazione fra le tante che ha subìto. Infatti i Francesi hanno il *trictrac, revertier, toutes-tables, tournecase, dames rabattues, plein, toc, gammon, jacquet, garanguet* ('Dictionnaire des jeux'), gl'Italiani lo *sbaraglino*, il *giacchetto a due ed a tre dadi*, ed in particolare i Romagnoli il *minoretto*; gli Spagnuoli il *toccadiglio*, ecc. ecc., Bartinelli nel suo *Sbaraglino*]. Ma l'antico giuoco del *trictrac* venne in seguito variato in più maniere, e quella sua modificazione che oggi è più in uso ed ha preso il nome di *giacchetto*, deve annoverarsi fra i giuochi di commercio, come di già abbiamo avvertito. [Il sig. Barbeyrac, loc. cit., pag. 121, dice che il *trictrac* è giuoco di commercio; sebbene noi lo vediamo sempre espressamente proibito fra i giuochi di azzardo, come può vedersi nell'ordinanza del 1319 di Carlo IV., detto il Bello, ed in altre successive]. Non tralasceremo qui di ricordarne la poetica origine descritta con molta eleganza dal Parini (loc. cit.), il quale attribuisce la sua invenzione ad un accorto amante, che cercò con lo strepito di questo giuoco di deludere la gelosia di un marito." The subsequent text of the section on *giacchetto* is in three chapters (pp. 144-161) ending with a very short glossary or "Dizionario che spiega i termini usati nel giacchetto," (pp. 162-164). The table, we are told, is divided into four parts, "che diremo *tavole* contenenti ciascuna sei *case* o *frezze*." The sixth paragraph informs us that "I numeri dissimili, come *due e asso, quattro e tre*, ecc., sono chiamati *semplici*. Quelli che sono eguali come due 3, due 4, ecc., sono chiamati *doppietti*. Nel leggere i numeri semplici bisogna sempre nominare il più gran numero per il primo; così *sei e quattro*, e non *quattro e sei*, dovrà pubblicarsi il tiro nel quale un dado presenta 4, e l'altro 6." The list of terms given to the doublets differs slightly from that we have already presented to the reader: "Ogni doppietto ha la sua denominazione particolare: i due assi si chiamano *ambi gli assi* o *assissimi*; i due 2 *duetta*; i due 3 *terni*; i due 4 *quaterna*; i due 5 *cinquina*; e i due 6 *seoni* o *sei tutti*." The writer cites from Bartinelli the Brescian phrase, *aver la mano*, "che significa essere il primo a giuocare." He states that double five is the best cast for the first one; "ed il peggiore, escluso *due e asso*, è quello degli *assissimi* [double aces] per cui si dice: *assissimi in primis sunt signum perditionis*," an adage which we have not found elsewhere. Two others are given afterwards: "*pedina toccata deve esser*

giuocata" and "*pedina lasciata è pedina giuocata.*" A series of doubled points and therefore impassible is called *legatura*, the verb *legare* being used in the same sense. As to the rules, we glean the following principal points. Your adversary's men are placed at the beginning of the game on the first point at your left, that is to say, on the first point of the first table, while your own are placed on the first point at your adversary's left. In moving the men, the starting point is not counted, but the finishing point is. In playing, the points or pips of the two dice are to be considered separately, never unitedly. Men can only be placed on points wholly unoccupied by adverse men. No men can be moved from the point on which all (*monte*) are placed at the beginning until the first man moved has reached the fourth table. No more than two points can be occupied in that table in which one's *monte* stands; this, however, may be any two, or may be varied from time to time. Doublets are played doubly, that is four times the number represented by each die. When the men have all arrived at the fourth table they may be either moved or thrown off indifferently. The second chapter is devoted to explanations of the method of play under various circumstances, a note at the end expounding the doctrine of probability as applied to casts of the dice. The laws of the game, 28 in number, are the subject of the third chapter, in the course of which we find that a die is not counted when it leans against the side of the table or against a man, in which case it is said to be *in aria*; and that the player uses for the French "*j'adoube*" either the word *acconcio* or *accommodo*. Finally, from the glossary we learn that *bossolo* ("dice-box") was formerly called, as the compiler thinks with greater precision, *cannello*; that a *marcia* is a game like a "gammon" in English, in which a player throws off all his men before his opponent has thrown off a single one, and that it counts as two games; that *marcia* is styled a *marcia per punti*, when it is not gained by means of a *legatura* (that is by barring the path of the adversary through a series of impassable points); that the *mucchio* is the point occupied at the outset by the men of either player (or perhaps the French *point de repose*); and that each of the four parts, into which the board is divided, now called a *tavola*, was in remote times known as a *campo*, while the word *tavole* was applied to the men, now known as *pedine* ("pawns").

The game of backgammon, now most commonly known as *tavola reale*, is still greatly played in Italy, as is shown by the fact that the folding board, usually of wood, inlaid, rather than of leather, is to be procured even in the smaller towns. They are generally not oblong as in England and America, but nearly always square when folded, having on the outside a smaller chess-board and merelles board. To give a fair idea of the usual method of play we copy the section devoted to the diversion in a recent anonymous handbook of games, which shows comparatively few signs of having been compiled under foreign influence. It is styled "Il libro dei giuochi" (Florence 1894), and the description of *tavola reale* is to be found on pp. 360-363: "Ecco un altro fra i giuochi nobili adottatissimo in quasi tutte le famiglie di una certa condizione, e per il quale molti signori spingono il gusto fino alla passione. Il suo materiale consiste in quella cassétta quadra sul piano esterno della quale si vede quasi sempre la scacchiera per gli scacchi o la dama. Si colloca aperta fra i due giuocatori, i quali avranno così due scatole unite, segnate in ciascun fondo di sei freccie da un lato e sei dall'altro, per

lo più alternate, una bianca e una nera. Vi sono inoltre quindici pedine bianche e quindici nere, un paio di dadi, e un bussolo per ciascun giuocatore, con che agitarli e gettarli. Prima di cominciare il giuoco si dispongano le pedine precisamente secondo la figura 19. Il giuocatore delle bianche mo-

Giuocatore delle pedine nere.



Giuocatore delle pedine bianche.

Fig. 19.

verà le sue pedine da destra a sinistra nel lato opposto, da sinistra a destra nel lato proprio, cioè percorrerà in giro dalle sue due pedine bianche opposte verso le due nere che ha sulla sua destra nella propria parte. Il giuocatore delle nere, al contrario, percorrerà il giro dalle due nere che ha in faccia a sinistra verso le due bianche che ha nella propria parte a sinistra. La parte A verso cui concorrono tutte le pedine, tanto bianche che nere, dicesi *casa*. Scopo del giuocatore è di ridurre in essa tutte le proprie pedine, e quindi di toglierle, come vedremo. Chi primo le toglie vince la partita. Si decide con i dadi chi deve giuocare per il primo, avendo questi un piccolo vantaggio sull' altro. I dadi devono esser gettati o nell' una o nell'altra parte della scatola. Balzando fuori uno di essi, si dovrà gettarli di nuovo. Il primo dunque getta i suoi dadi, e fa avanzare verso la direzione già indicata due delle sue pedine, ciascuna per tante freccie quante ne indica ciascun dado; ovvero fa avanzare una sola pedina per tanti punti quanta è la somma dei punti fatti dai due dadi. Indi l' altro giuocatore prende i dadi e giuoca alla sua volta: così tiro per tiro le pedine di ciascuno avanzano verso la casa. Quando vi sieno tutte raccolte, non prima, allora si cominciano a togliere di tavola corrispondentemente ai punti che si faranno. La pedina che nel suo corso va a posarsi dove ne è una sola dell' avversario, la toglie di giuoco prendendo il suo posto. Ciò si chiama *dare* all' altro. Ma non sempre conviene di dare, ed è anzi talora buon giuoco di astenersene. L' altra dovrà, tirando i dadi, rientrare in giuoco, cioè ricominciare il giro dalla casa. E se i punti tratti corrispondessero a freccie occupate da più di una pedina avversaria, non può rientrare, e ritenterà nuovamente all' altro suo turno, senza poter movere le altre sue pedine finchè ne abbia fuori di giuoco. Gettati i dadi e toccata una pedina la si dovrà movere se è possibile. Però, allorchè gettando i dadi sortono ciascuno di essi con punti eguali, ciò si fa un *dop-*

pietto, si considera il tiro come doppio, e allora si muovono quattro pedine, o due per il doppio dei punti fatti, o una per il quadruplo. I doppietti hanno nomi speciali, cioè: *bambini*, *duetti*, *terni*, *quadretti*, *china*, *sena*. Dopo il fin qui detto, si capisce bene che non è unico scopo del giuocatore di correre impazzatamente alla meta, ma vi saranno molti calcoli da fare, e molta cautela da adoperare. Così, ognuno cercherà di restare il meno possibile con una pedina sola sul corso dell'avversario (*restare a tavola*) e procurerà di accomodare la mossa dei due pezzi in modo che vadano a riunirsi o addossarsi ad altri. Procurerà altresì di coprire più che possa, sempre con più di un pezzo s'intende, quante più può freccie della casa dalla propria parte, 1° per trovarsi pronto e bene sterzato colle pedine per il momento in cui comincierà a levarle: 2° perchè, dandosi il caso che all'avversario si avesse tolta una pedina, gli sarà tanto più difficile di rientrare nella casa nostra quante più frecce vi troverà impedite, fino da non tirare affatto quando lo sieno tutte. In questo caso chi ha i dadi tira di seguito e muove fino a che non resti libera una freccia nella sua casa. Così, per esempio, supponiamo che il giuocatore delle bianche tiri per il primo sei, asso. Egli con una pedina della freccia M [fig. 20] farà il sei, con quella della freccia R farà

Fig. 20.

l'asso; e metterà così due pedine sulla freccia S. Supponiamo che il giuocatore dei neri tiri quattro, due. Egli farà il quattro con una pedina della freccia H, e il due con una della freccia F, ponendole entrambe sulla freccia D, e così, come taluni dicono, avrà *fatto una casa*. Facendo il giuocatore dei bianchi, per esempio sena egli può muovere il gruppo della freccia A, e portarlo sulla freccia G., e poi, perchè con cotesto gruppo non potrebbe fare un altro sei, essendo la freccia N occupata dai neri, ei può staccare un'altro gruppo di due della freccia M alla S. Ecco chiaro il vantaggio dei doppietti: muoverne, due per volta. Ridotte tutte le pedine in casa, le si tolgono a seconda dei punti. Così relativamente al bianco, facendo china, ed

avendo tutte le pedine in casa, ei ne potrebbe togliere quattro dalla freccia U. Facendo quattro e due, ne toglie una dalla V e una dalla Y. Se la Y fosse vuota, avanza di due punti una pedina del T, o del U. Se non vi sono pedine sulle freccie superiori, cioè punti da fare, si tolgono addirittura di giuoco le pedine dalle freccie inferiori al punto fatto. Alcuni muovono più tardi che sia possibile le prime due pedine della parte opposta della casa, per aver con esse la probabilità d' incontrare qualche pedina a tavola e toglierla di giuoco. Talora si è veduto l' uno dei giuocatori aver la pedina fuori e l' altro mezze le pedine tolte, già presso a vincere ; ma costretto questi a restare, nel togliere le sue pedine, a tavola, e l' altro fatto il punto di quella freccia, levargli alla sua volta quella pedina, e vincer la partita per aver la sua casa ben barricata." The variety here described is the ordinary English backgammon (the French "toutes-tables"). We must always remember that it may be a modern importation into Italy.

A still later compilation by J. Gelli, "Come posso divertirmi" (Milan 1901), before cited (p. 102), devotes a few pages (207-17) to the game, which it calls sometimes *tavola reale* and sometimes *tric-trac*. These pages are evidently a compilation from the French. Two variations are described—*trictrac* and the *giuoco del giacchetto*. Three or four others are simply mentioned—always by their French names (*garanguet*, *dames rabattues*, *toute-table or gammon*). The technical terms are sometimes Italian and sometimes more or less distorted French forms. The Italian designations of the doublets are stated to be : aces, *ambassi, ambo gli assi, asso doppio ;* deuces, *ambo* ; treys, *terna ;* fours, *quaterna ;* fives, *china ;* sixes, *sena*—showing some slight differences when compared with the list previously cited. *Trictrac* is spoken of in one place as *tavola reale alla francese*. The terms *jan*, *contro-jan*, and *angolo di quiete* o *di riposo* are employed ; a "blot" is a *pedina scoperta ;* a point, that is one of the twelve on each side of the table, is a *freccia*. The French "abattre de bois" is rendered as *far legna*, and is explained as "a cast of the die which enables the player to advance two men instead of one." When the player is not able to play the points displayed by the dice the position is said to be *chiuso*. In *giacchetto* the man thrown forward at the commencement of the game to the fourth table is styled *corriere*. The compiler states that the number of men in *trictrac* is thirty, rarely thirty-two, while in *giacchetto*, it is always thirty. How much the two French varieties which are here treated are actually played in Italy it is not easy to say.

As to Germany, we have already learned (pp. 90-91) that the nard game, in the stage when it was known as *wurfzabel*, was established in that country as early as the XIIIth century. It would not be easy to demonstrate absolutely, by documentary or linguistic evidence, that any vernacular terms relating to dice, or simple dice-play, were in use before the table-game proper could have became known north of the Alps. In fact, so far as any extant German literary records go, we might surmise that dice and tables, that is some form of backgammon (Roman or other) must have crossed the mountains at about the same time. But, on the other hand, it would, nevertheless, be too much to infer that the German people first knew the die only as an implement appertaining to the table-game, considering that dice, as a means of diversion, must have been known as far back as the days when soldiers of Rome garrisoned so many portions of Germany—long

before the downfall of their great empire. It is most probable, indeed, that the Germanic peoples learned the use of dice from the Roman soldiery, in spite of the fact that Tacitus conveys the idea that the habit of dice-play was a peculiarly German evil. Nevertheless (we are always in a period of doubt), it is not impossible that dice may have reached the more or less nomadic tribes of northern and eastern Europe from Asia—to which quarter of the world a cloudy legend assigns their origin. The so-called "Grande encyclopédie" of France has thus summed up the commonly conceived notion of the ancient German and general mediæval devotion to games at dice: "Le jeu de dés, selon Tacite, etait une veritable passion chez les Germains: lorsqu'ils avaient tout perdu ils jouaient sur un dernier coup leur liberté. Plus tard au moyen âge, ce fut un des jeux favoris des chevaliers. On trouvait des académies de jeu de dés (scholæ deciorum). Il y avait même une corporation spéciale d'industriels qui fabriquaient les dés á jouer, les déciers. Malgré les interdictions et les ordonnances (en particulier, celles de 1254 et de 1256 par lesquelles saint Louis défendait le jeu et la fabrication des dés) le jeu resta cher pendant tout le moyen âge aux hommes et aux femmes; plus tard les lansquenets se signalèrent spécialement par leur passion pour les dés." As to the testimony of Roman writers in regard to the prevalence of dice-play among the German tribes we shall come to that farther on.

We shall now first endeavour to learn what we can about the appellations connected with dice, in the early centuries of the modern period, since most of those appellations may be considered as a part of the terminology of backgammon. The generic German word for "die," is *würfel* (plural as singular); according to the lexicographers it is a derivative of *wurf*, a noun signifying a "throw" or "cast." This latter is formed from the plural preterite stem of the verb *werfen* (singular, *ich warf*, plural, *wir wurfen*), and is really genuine old High German (influenced, as stated below, by the Low German form). Unlike the languages we have been treating so far, and unlike the English, the German, therefore, possesses an indigenous term for this important implement of the backgammon game. The congener of *werfen* in English is the verb "*warp*," which had the same signification (to "throw" or "cast") in its Anglo-Saxon and Middle English forms, a meaning now lost. The second or terminal element of *würfel* is the derivative syllable *-el* (*-l*), which, even in very old times, served two purposes, first and foremost to form substantives and adjectives from verbal and other stems; secondly and subsidiarily to form diminutives. In this way *würfel* would literally mean a "throwing," "throw," "little throw," or "little thing thrown." In old High German—during the XIth and XIIth centuries—it took the shape, under Low German influence, of *worfil, worfel*. From *würfel* comes, by means of the verbal suffix *-en* (*-n*), the verb *würfeln*, to "cast" or "throw dice," to "play dice," to "dice." A dice-player is styled a *würfler*, and dice-playing ("gambling"), or the "game of dice," is known as *würfelspiel*—a minstrel of the XIIIth century, as we shall see hereafter, exclaiming: *der diuvel schuof das würfel spil*, "the devil created the game of dice." Remembering all this, we shall understand the old German name given to nard-backgammon, *wurfzabel* (that is "throw-tables"), to which we may have occasion to refer again. We dwell somewhat fully on these etymologies, because it is by means of these philological evidences that we may be able, if at all, to decide on the simultaneous or non-simultaneous introduc-

tion into Iceland of pure games of dice, and of table-games, in which dice are subordinately employed. As to dice-play, there is a singular bit of severe prose comment on the subject in Haussdörffer's "Compendiöses Lexikon Apophtegmaticum" (Nürnberg 1718): "Der die würfel erfunden, hat sechs galgen verdient: den ersten für sich, den andern für seine spielgesellen, den dritten für den zuseher, den vierten für den, so den spielplatz hält, den funften für den, so das spielen erstlich lehret, und den sechsten für die herrschaft, welche das spielen nicht verbietet."

The numbers given to the dice-pips play a noticeable part in later Latin mathematical history. As we are taught by the most famous of the classical architectural writers, Vitruvius, the mathematicians of Rome styled 6 the "perfect" number (because of $1+2+3=6$), and accordingly formed a peculiar terminology applicable to the elements contained in it. The six lowest members of the numeral series were given these names: *unio*, *binio*, *ternic*, *quaternio*, *quinio*, *senio* (all feminine substantives, forming the genitive in *-onis*). However these forms may have originated, they seem at once, or within a short period, to have been applied to the dice-pips, the many-sided Isidore of Seville (who, born about 570, died in 636), apparently knowing them only in that connection; for he says, in his chief work ("Origines," 12, 65): "Jactus, quisque apud lusores veteres a numero vocabatur ut *unio*, *binio*, *ternio*, *quaternio*, *quinio*, *senio*." Notice his expression, *lusores veteres* ("ancient players"), as if he believed the terms to be classic, whereas they are really post-classic. These numbers, or many of them, passed over into modern forms, and were, in their new shapes, or in the original Latin, of frequent use, as the reader will have, perhaps, already observed, in the mediæval "tables" manuscripts.

The numbered pips, or dice-spots, known by names derived from the romance tongues are, in the older German, *as*, *daus* (*tûs*, *dausz*, *taus*, *tausz*), "deuce;" *quater* (*quatter*, *katter*), "quatre," "cater;" *zink* (*zingg*), "*cinq*;" *sesz* (a middle High German form), "sice." One of the newest German publications on games (A. von Hahn's "Buch des Spiele," Leipzig 1900, 3rd edition, p. 262), in describing the backgammon variety *toccategli*, says of the names of the dice: "Die eins heisst, *as* oder *es;* die zwei, *dous;* die drei zuweilen *dres;* die vier *quatuor* oder *quater;* die fünf *cinque* oder *zink;* die sechs *sis* oder *sess*"—but *dous* is not often so written, and *dres* is unknown to most lexicologists. Older works on the same table-game (as, for instance, the anonymous "Neueste Anleitung wie die trictrac- und toccategliе-spiel recht und wohl zu spielen," Nürnberg 1773, (p. 5), and various editions in the same century of the German Hoyle, ("Das neue königliche l'hombre,") vary in their orthography, writing *ass* oder *ess*, *tres*, *sis*, while they add the technical titles of the doublets: aces, *ambesas* or *bezet;* deuces, *double deux;* threes, *ternes* or *tournes;* fours, *carnes*, *carmes;* fives, *quines;* sixes, *sonnes*, *sanne* or *sannez*—all of Romance *prevénance*. *Ass* is, of course, of the same origin as the French "as" and our "ace;" an earlier orthography (middle High German and late old High German) was *esse*. The newer form is doubtless influenced by, if not directly derived from the French. There is no absolutely certainty as to the remote origin of this term, common to so many languages and used in all of them in so many popular sayings. Brachet makes the French *as* to come from the Latin *as*, which came to signify the unit of measure, and was thence applied to the playing card, or

to that side of a dice-cube which is marked with a single point. The Latin dictionaries usually suggest, as the source of the Latin *as*, a Tarentian dialect form, ἄς, of the Greek εἷς ("one"), but doubt is thrown on this by the "Century Dictionary" (*sub* "ace"). *Daus* follows our "deuce" in having a double etymology. As a dice term it is to be referred to *duos* (accusative of the Latin *duo*); when it is an adjuration (as in the English "Deuce take you!" or the German *Was der daus!*) it is doubtless, a corruption of the Latin *deus* ("deity"). This debased signification (="devil") belongs to a common class of phenomena occurring in the process of etymological development. The vernacular *drei* is, in modern usage, much more usual than *tres* or *dres*. The varying forms of *quater* come, of course, through the French numeral form, from the Latin *quadrio* or *quatuor*. *Cinque* and *zinq* represent the French "cinq." Whether *sis* or *sess* is of direct modern Romance derivation (like our "sice") is not yet, we believe, fully decided. Of the doublet names *carnes* (contracted from *quaterno*), *quines* and *sonnes* are from the series enumerated by Isidor, very likely through the French.

These appellations of the dice-points—*augen*="eyes" as they are styled in the vernacular—were used figuratively very early in German literature, both by the poets and in proverbs. Instances of the latter are very numerous, but are generally, if not always, suggested by the dice, or drawn from pure dice playing, having no apparent reference to any table-game. One of the most wide-spread is the rhyming adage which has been popularly ascribed to Luther (and which is said to be really found in a still existing MS autographic collection of proverbial sayings compiled by the noted reformer):

Daus es nichts hat;
Ses zink nichts dat ["gives"],
Aber quater drey
Die sind stèts dabey ["always on hand],

or as Luther makes the final lines: *quater drey halten was* (*uns*) *frey*, other versions having as the closing words, *hilfen frei*. It is sometimes found in a slightly varied form: *Daus es hat nichts*, | *sesz zink gibt nichts*, | *quater drei muss herhalten*. Here, of course, the smallest numbers are employed to represent the lowest and poorest classes, the intermediate numbers indicate the sober, more trustworthy, commercial middle ranks, and the two highest stand for the nobility and less energetic wealthy orders. The theme is frequently varied and has gone into many languages, whether from the German or Latin we hesitate to say, the oldest Latin form being: *Unio pauperior Codro est, ut binas egenus: senio nil confert: quinio nil tribuit.* As is seen, *ternio* and *quaternio* are omitted, so that the point of the saying is missed. Codrus was the name of two insignificant Latin poetasters, one of whom was made famous by the accounts of his extreme poverty. In an old volume, which contains some translations from Ovid, there is an English metrical rendering of the proverb just cited:

Deuce ace cannot
Pay scot and lot;
  Sice sink will not pay;
Be it known to all —
What payments fall
  Must light on coter tray,

—"coter" being *quater*. Similar is the couplet from the story of "Reynard the Fox" as given to us by F. S. Ellis and T. F. Crane (London 1897)—

That which is likened to deuce ace
Hath in esteem the lowest place.

An old popular German bard, yclept Rosenplüt (Rosenblüt), who made the flowers of poesy bloom at Nuremberg between 1431 and 1460, says in his "Nürnberger rais:"

Taus es wart daz ir nicht verlast
Und weichet nicht von kotter drei;
Die werden euch daz spiel gewinnen.
Ses zink die wonen euch nicht pei.

Here *taus es* refers to the common people, *kotter drei* to the middle classes, and *ses zink* to the nobility. But the boldest allegory based upon the dice-points is one cited from a middle High German piece by the Rhenish poet Reimar von Zweter (died after 1252), which ascribes the origin of their numbers to his Satanic majesty:

Der tiuvel schuof das würfelspiel
Dar umbe daz er sêlen vil dâ mite gewinnen will.
Das esse er hât gemaht dar ûf doz éin got gewaltic ist.
Der himel in sinen handen stât
Und diu erde, dar ûf er das tûs gemachet hat:
Die drîen ûf die drîe namen die er hât, der süeze vœre Krist:
Daz quâter wohrte er mit grozen listen
Uf die namen der vier êvangelisten:
Den zinken ûf des menschen sinne
Wie er die fünfte mache kranc:
Das ses, wie er sechs wochen lanc
Die wasten uns mit toppel ane gewinne.[162]

Sometimes the allegorical meaning attached to the points takes another shape, as in the lines from "Eraklius," also a poem of the XIIIth century, ascribed to one Meister Otto, whose birthplace, residence and family name are all unknown, and who, as it seems, elaborated it from an early French poetical piece, called "L'empereur Eracles" by Gautier d'Arras, a writer who lived and wrote nearly a hundred years before Meister Otto. This is his allusion to some of the dice-numbers:

Umbe die frowen stât ez sô
Rehte als umbe ein toppelspil,
Ob manz ze rechte merken wil,
Er ist wâr und niht gelogen.
Es velt eim richen herzogen
Als lihte ein esse oder ein tûs
Als dem bœsten [meanest] von dem hûs,

which seems intended to indicate that the same destiny awaits both high and low.

Still earlier in the same century lived the rhymer known only as the "Stricker"—by profession as has hence been supposed, a rope-maker—whose home seems to have been in South-eastern Germany and in Austria. He died about the year 1250. After having produced an epic on Charlemagne,

[162] A modern German version of this piece is given on a subsequent page.

he composed a variety of poetical works, in one of the best known of which, the "Pfaffe Amis," he cites proverbially the two lowest dice-points:

Dar umbe sül wir prisen
Den pfaffen Amisen,
Twie verre er fuor in daz lant
Daz man doch zallen zîten vant
Vil grôzen rât in sîne hûs
Dâ viel daz esse noch das tûs
Nicht an der handelunge.

A yet more renowned rhymer of the same period, meister Freidank, whose individuality, after long research, is still a subject of debate, classes together, as alike treacherous sports, dice, racing and falconry (*federspiel*):

Dess pfand gar oft im spiel verfällt,
Der seine ehr' auf würfel stellt.
Würfel, ross und federspiel
Haben treu die taugt nicht viel.

Among others of a later date, Hans Sachs introduces the terminology of the game into one of his quasi-religious dramatic pieces, when he makes the soldiers of Pontius Pilate cast dice for the garment of Christ:

Romanus. — Das losz werfen wir über dem
Gestrickten rock, welcher in nehm.

Er würft mit zehn würfeln ein wurf und spricht:

Ich hab drei esz, ich bin darvon,
Er wird an mich mit langen ton.
Der ander Knecht. — Ich hab drei dausz, gwin auch nit viel
Mit dir ich darnach gleichen wil.
Der dritt Knecht. — Nu secht zu, ich hab quater drei:
Ich hoff ich sei auch noch darbei.
Der viert Knecht. — Glück walts, der würfel trägt sesz daus:
Der rock ist mein, das spiel ist ausz.

Another writer of theatrical pieces, cited by Vigil Raber in one of his collection of twenty-six "Sterzinger Spiele" (1510-1535)—the twenty-fifth play—makes one of his characters say to another: *Du richtst dein sach nur nach sesz, zingg, quotter:* while in an old ballad to be found in Uhland's "Volkslieder" there is a similar passage:

Drei würfel zucket ich herfür
Und warf zink, quater, drei.

O. Schade, in his "Satiren und pasquille aus der reformationszeit" (Hannover, 1853-8), cites various old poetical allusions to dice, as *Der paur sprach 'quater, zinke'*, (20-17); and in the well known "tragedia, der irdisch Pilger genandt" (Nürnberg 1562) of Johann Heros, one of the persons says:

Gefallen ist mir quatter ses,
Darauf mir quatter daus auch fellt.

Much earlier is the "Renner," a didactic poem by Hugo von Trimberg, who lived at Bamberg through the first decade of the XIVth century, in which we find what seems to be a rhymed proverb,

Von zinken quâter unde tûs
Hât manger ein unberâten hûs.

Many more such verselets and quaint sayings might be quoted. Thus there is an exclamation made by a player who has been losing, on throwing a small and useless combination of the dice: *Dauszes, hastu mein pferd nicht gesehen?* — referring to the wagered and lost horse. A somewhat quaint definition of this rather obscure phrase is given by a German writer. He informs us that it is *vom spiel entlehnt und ausruf desjenigen, der einen schlechten wurf thut, der, wenn ein pferd auf dem spiel steht, sagen will, "damit werde ich mein pferd nicht gewinnen." Der spieler redet gleichsam das daus-ess an, indem er sagt: "Hättest du mein pferd gesehen, wüsstest du, wie gut es ist, du wärst nicht gekommen, denn du bist schuld, dass ich's verliere."* *Quater auff einem würfel* is a definition cited from a glossary of 1482. In a collection of songs (1582) we have: *Sie warf ein zinken unde ein tùs* (i. e., in all *sieben*). A thing is said to be so *ungewis als wann einer mit dausz esz ein spil gewinnen will.* In an old piece, entitled "Bruder Rausch," the following couplet occurs:

> Er sprach "ich [der teufel] far in den würfel,
> Von dem quater mach ich ein tausz."

An early German adage is *ses oder es*, equivalent to "aut Caesar aut nihil." All these shreds of literature apply more especially to dice-play, but we have reproduced them, as we have hinted, because the names of the dice-points form likewise an essential part of the vocabulary of nard-backgammon. An interesting technical term used wherever dice are employed, and of a peculiar importance in German backgammon, is *pasch*, which, though singular, is really equivalent to the English "doublets" (*pasch werfen* = to "throw doublets"). More than one explanation of the word's origin has been attempted, but the etymology of Grimm is probably accurate, or, at least, is the generally accepted one. He makes it signify both "doublets" and "triplets," and derives it from the French *passe-dix* (signifying: "goes over ten," "passes ten," "exceeds ten"), and seems strictly to have the meaning of "at least eleven," the definition in Grimm being *ein spiel mit drei würfeln wobei der wurf von mehr als 10 (also mindestens 11) augen bei gleicher augenzahl auf zwei würfeln gewinnt, woher auch der ältere Aachener mundart das verbum "paschendise" (würfeln, paschen) entnahm.* Another lexicographer, Daniel Sanders (1863), asserts that the word *pasch* is a name sometimes given to *mühlspiel* (merelles), which is, of course, one of the customary lexicographical blunders, and then he goes on to give a secondary (dice) signification thus: *Beim spiel mit drei würfeln ein wurf, bei dem zwei würfeln gleich viel augen zeigen (doppelwurf)* — making, if strictly interpreted, three dice essential, but he goes on to say that *jungfern-pasch* is a term applied, *wenn auch der dritte [würfel] dieselbe zahl augen hat*, but (sub voce *alle*), he describes *alle pasch* as *ein wurf, im brettspiel, wobei auf allen würfeln dieselbe zahl oben liegt.* A minor lexicologist, deluded perhaps by the phrase "numeri pares," as applied to the upturned points of two dice, suggests the word *par* as the origin of *pasch.* In connection with *pasch* a word *elfern* is alluded to in some of the lexicons, but is sought in vain in most of their vocabularies. *Pasch* is still used, in the various backgammon games practised in Germany, in the sense of "doublets;" while, in the variety known as *der lange puff*, the higher first throw, to decide the beginning player, is known, as *general-pasch.* The term is likewise employed in

pure dice-games, when on two dice the number of the pips is the same, which are then counted together; if the pips on three dice, thrown together, are alike, they are counted four fold. Only occasionally does the word make its appearance in general German literature. Hoffmanswaldau, a poet of the XVIth century, exclaims somewhere in one of his pieces: *Hier ist der würfel pasch!* ("Gedichte," Leipzig 1645, 4. 5). *Pasch* seems to be used sometimes in the sense of to "throw dice," or "playing dice." Thus the learned and ingenious essayist, Heinrich Friedrich Sturz (1737-79), says: *Man hatte mir vor karten gewarnt und so wandte ich ein dasz ich kein spiel als höchstens pasch verstünde.* Often, by general writers, the word is employed in a mistaken sense, as when a seventeenth century writer declares of one of his characters: *er auch sogleich einen paschwürfel nebst einer spielkarte brachte*, as if the signification were "a die," or a "set of dice." Abele von Liljenberg (about 1760), one of the famous "Fruchtbringende Gesellschaft," appears to propose, satirically doubtless, to decide lawsuits by throws of the dice, *Alle rechts- oder gerichts-verfahrungen mit drei paschwürfel endigen oder erörtern.* As is so often the case with technical terms, the word got to be applied to other objects than those which it originally characterised, so that in the Bavarian dialect the children's game *klicker* (or *schusserspiel*) was also named *paschen* — perhaps from the close or doubled positions of the marbles. Sometimes the form *basch* — perhaps older — was used. Thus the Gotha poet, Friedrich Wilhelm Gotter (1746-97), writes in a poem called "Herr von Malaga und der tod" (1787):

> Mein held, ob ihm vor angst gleich jede nerve bebte,
> Die zähne klappten und die zung' an gaumen klebte,
> Zwang (wie beym basche sonst, wann ehr' und seligkeit
> Auf eines würfels fläche schwebte),
> Sein muskelspiel zu falscher heiterkeit,
> Indess er Spaniol in langen zügen schlürfte.

From the noun a verb *paschen* was formed, meaning originally to "throw doublets," but afterwards to "cast dice," "play at dice" as well. The author of the popular "Simplicimus" (Hans von Grimmelshausen) cries, *Wollen wir jetzunder paschen* (1669), and a somewhat later writer says: *wenn der alter herr lust hat zu paschen oder.... piket zu spielen.*" From *paschen*, again, comes the compound *auspaschen*, cited by Sanders (1871) with this illustration: *zur vergütung seiner auslagen durfte er eine ente herauspaschen* [that is *auswürfeln, würflend ausspielen*] *lassen*," thus meaning to "stake at dice," "raffle away." Another such verb, *abpaschen*, defined as to "throw away at dice," is also found, with a citation from a minor writer: *euch abzupaschen, armer schächer, ist mir nur spass.* Among other instances of greater or less ignorance among lexicographers may be mentioned a definition by Rädlein (1711): *ein pasch würfel*="un jeu de dez;" one by Schmid (1831): *basch*= "jactus decretorius" (*entscheidender wurf*); one by another less known compiler is less erroneous, *paschwürfel=würfel zum paschen.*

That the German should have, and should have introduced into other languages spoken in the region round about his fatherland, such a peculiar word as *pasch* to express doublets at dice, may strike the reader as strange. It may be partly owing to the fact that the counterpart of our word "double" (or "doublet"), coming to us from the Latin through the French, got another and established meaning in connection with dice at an early day. *Doppeln*

literally to "double," signified to "play at dice," to "dice." Grimm has some interesting remarks on the word. He says that the meaning to "play at dice," which was its earliest signification, became especially common in North Germany. Later it was applied to other dangerous or injurious games of chance, to which were attached the reputation of treacherous, swindling or contemptible methods of play, which bad signification was also applied to the noun *doppeler* (gambler). In the Holstein dialect, *dubblen* even means, in general, to "play at cards." The word is a derivative from the Latin *duplus*, and implies the doubling of the stake at games. Some other lexicographers cited by Grimm agree with him in this explication, regarding it as "a staking double," an increasing or outbidding the stake of the adversary at dice or cards, either by agreeing to pay double, if a loser, or by adding an additional sum to that already at stake. Other writers refer its origin to that which is now called *pasch*, the cast of equal dice-points (that is, double points), the French and English "doublet." In old High German the term is not found, but it existed already in old Frisian (*dobbela, doblia*). In middle High German it was *toppeln;* in Low German (niederdeutsch), *dobbeln*, *dobeln:* in Dutch *dobbelen;* in early Icelandic it was *dubla*, *dufla*, to gamble (in the Norwegian code known as the "Gulaþingslaug" of the XIIth century), and the noun *dufl* (gambling) occurs in the same code, while in a mathematical essay of the XIVth century, "Algorismus," it is used in the sense of "double;" the Swedish has *dubbla* or *dobbla*, and the Danish *doble*. In the earliest citations of Grimm something of the sense of *duplicare*, is still retained. The earliest is from Wolfram von Eschenbach's "Parzival" of the XIIIth century:

> Umbe den wurf der sorgen
> Wart getoppelt.

A similar sentiment is from the same period:

> Manec unsüeze schande
> Wart getoppelt dâ der heidenschaft.

The following, too, is nearly of the same date:

> Wir hân êrste umbe den wurf
> Getopelt der grôzen sorgen.

A preacher, a century later, says: *ir sült ouch dar umbe mit tanzen an dem ruowetage oder spiln oder toppeln.* In a glossary of 1482 *toppeln* is explained as "ludere cum taxillis," by which it will be seen that it then had only its technical signification, to "play dice." Another preacher exclaims: *spilest und doppelst mit ihnen wie ein erzlotterbube!* In the XVIth century the prolific Johannes Fischart, who, among his other labours, produced a free rendering of the "Gargantua" of Rabelais, uses the word in his version: *Lasz uns eins toppeln, der minst ist knecht;* and again *Ist niemands hie der doppeln will?* A later and less famous moralist, Henneberger, dwells on the evil of dicing: *Denn es von allerlei losern gesinde ein zu hauf gesammeltes volk war, welche nichts anders thaten denn in den tabernen doppelten, spielten und soffen—spielen* and *doppelen* being here, as often, joined in the same phrase, and must perhaps, sometimes be translated "playing and gambling." A glossary, much more recent than the one we have cited, that of Henisch,

"Teutsche Sprach und Weisheit, A-G (1616), renders *doppeln* by "ludere aleis, jacere talos, aleas, tesseras, duplo ludere," all but the last definition referring literally to dice-play. Lessing makes one of his characters a determined *doppeler: Dieser mensch hat ganz und gar keinen geschmack am tanzen, und bereitet den spieler unvermerkt in ein seitenzimmer mit ihm zu gehen, um eine viertelstunde mit einander da zu doppeln.* The 1863 edition of Sanders cites a passage in which a good dean is seen to have such boundless faith in providence that it even embraces the dice-box: *Der dechant spricht.... seine segen über die würfel, wenn er doppelt.* Sanders here expresses a doubt as to the origin of the play-term *doppeln*, whether it come from dice-play or from the table-game; he even suggests that it may be connected with the English word "dub." In his "Fremdwörterbuch" (1871) Sanders gives the word *doublet*, explaining it as "*pasch* im *würfelspiel.*" A Swiss linguistic student, Stalder (1757-1833), asserts that the word, in a central Swiss dialect, is employed in target-shooting: *doppeln heiszt auch den doppel erlegen bei schiessen.* The term occurs in proverbs, as in one quoted by Simrock: *Wer im finstern doppelt, verliert die würfel;* and others are to be found in Wander's great "Sprichwörterlexicon" (1867-80), as *Auff doppel spiel muss main leib, gut und alles wagen;* and *wer gern doppelt, kommt leicht zu nichts.* To the former of these two is appended the following historical note: *Dies sprichwort hatte man im 17 jahrhundert trotz der gesetzlichen bestimmungen der spieler solle nur das verlieren, was er zum spiele bringe, und selbst dies nicht vollständig, weil man wegen spielschulden niemand weiter als bis aufs hemd pfänden solle, und namentlich nicht verwetten solle, was ihm Gott anerschaffen hat.* An old dictionary-maker, Caspar von Stieler, has, in his "Teutscher Sprachschatz" (1691), not a few quotations relating to *doppelspiel: Er doppelt über die maszen gern; das doppeln* (the verbal noun) *hat ihn zum armen mann gemacht; beim doppeln musz mann aufsetzen*, a sort of proverb which he renders into Latin: "exercens aleam pecuniam in ludum deponat;" Stieler also uses the verb, *ausdoppeln*, to "cease to play dice."

We have thus expressed what, so far as our researches have gone (and they have by no means been exhaustive), we are enabled to say in regard to the introduction into Germany of dice, and of their use as a means of gambling; we have also treated the subject of the names given in German to the dice-pips, a matter which concerns not only the pure dice-play, but also the game of nard-backgammon in perhaps a still higher degree. Previous to any account of the varieties of back-gammon, and the German methods of play, we shall give a hasty version of a recent essay on dice-play in Germany by the orientalist, August Wünsche, published in the widely-known review, "Nord und Süd" (Breslau vol. 80, Marz 1897). The article bears the title: "Deutsche männer und frauenspiele während des mittelalters," but we are only concerned with the portions (pp. 329-334), which relate to dice and the nard-game. "The dice-game," he says, alluding to *würfelspiel*, "which is probably identical with *bickelspiel*, originated in the east. According to tradition it was invented in the city of Hazarth (Hezar) in Palestine, wherefore it is often called a game of *hazard*. Among the adherents to old Germanic mythology Wotan (Odin) was regarded as the inventor of dice. But on the introduction of Christianity several old attributes and spheres of activity were transferred to the spirits of evil, and

thus the devil, at a later day, came to be regarded as the originator of dice. He was supposed to have created them for the purpose of gaining souls for his infernal kingdom. Yet against his will the product of his ingenuity was made to serve Christianity, as is shown by a short poem of Reinmar von Zweter, in which the six dice-numbers were symbolically applied to the Christian faith:

Der tenfel schuf das wurfelspiel,
Weil er damit wiel seelen sich gewinnen will,
Das asz hat er deshalb gemacht, weil ein gewalt'ger Gott da ist.
Der himmel sammt der erde steht
In seiner hand, auf welche zwei das daus wohl geht,
Die drei auf seinen namen, die da hat der süsze wahre Christ.
Das quatre, das schuf er mit groszen listen
Auf die vier evangelisten,
Die fünfe auf des menschen sinne,
Dasz er die fünf ihm mache krank,
Die sechs, dasz er sechs wochen lang
Die fasten uns durch würfeln abgewinne. [163]

Dice-playing was known as *toppeln* (*topeln*) and the dice-player as *topeler*. The dice-board, also the backgammon-board (*wurfzabel*), in old French styled "berlenc," was generally of marble, the dice themselves, on the other hand, of bones of the ox, and bore, as they still bear, the numbers *esse*, *tus*, (*taws*), *drie*, *kwater*, *zinke* and *ses*. Even the ancient Germans, as the Roman historian Tacitus ('Germania,' cap. XXIV) informs us, were passionately devoted to dice-play. He writes: 'They practise dice-play—at which one will naturally wonder—soberly, and quite as if it were a serious business, with such hardihood in winning and losing, that, when they have nothing more left, they stake their freedom and their person on a last cast of the die. The loser resigns himself voluntarily to servitude; even if he be younger and stronger than his adversary, he allows himself to be bound and sold. Thus great is their stanchness in an affair so bad; they themselves call it keeping their word.' [164] The Roman, coldly calculating, and acting always with meditation, could not comprehend how the German, with his serious earnestness could give himself up to dice-playing, and could even make it accord with his sense of morality. This same popularity was enjoyed by games at dice during the Middle Ages, among men and women, monks and nuns, and frequently high sums were staked. It even happened, and not so rarely, that a player lost all his possessions in the space of a few hours. Often dice-play led to brawling and strife, but in spite of that it was eagerly carried on. Knights devoted themselves to it, especially in their after-dinner repose. Thus it occurred, according to the rhymed Holstein Chronicle, that the Danish King Eric III, 'Plogpenning,' as he was styled, engaged in an afternoon game at *worptafelspel* (backgammon), was surprised by his foes and murdered. On festival occasions, such as coronations, espousals and drink-

[163] For the original middle High German text of these lines see p. 243.

[164] The words of Tacitus, in the place cited, are: "Aleam, quod misere, sobrii inter seria exercent, tanta lucrandi perdendive temeritate, ut, cum omnia defecerunt, extremo ac novissimo jactu de libertate ac de corpore contendant. Victus voluntarium servitutem adit; quamvis juvenior, quamvis robustior adligare se ac venire patitur. Ea est in re prava pervicacia; ipsi fidem vocant."

ing-bouts, games at dice were particularly common. At the coronation of King Arthur, as the poet of the 'Roman de Brut' tells us, his knights called for dice, tables and chess; one won and another lost; they pawned their effects for money, until at last they began to cheat each other, and finally separated foaming with rage. The passion for dice-play penetrated even into the convents, and the monks, in their absorption, not only forgot the prescribed prayers and other acts of devotion, but also neglected their studies. On the Lauterberg (now Petersberg) near Halle, in the year 1223, there existed in a convent such a rage for play, and such a corruption of manners and morals ensued, that dice-play went on furiously even in the apartments of the superior (*propst*), and chess and draughts [this latter could hardly have been known in Germany at that date] were played, while mead and wine were sold at the same time. Playing at dice was even carried into the next world. In the well-known tale (fableau) of 'St. Peter and the player' ('St. Pierre et le Jongleur') St. Peter one day, during the absence of Satan, appears in the lower regions with dice and a dice-board, and begins to play with the temporary guardian—a demon devoted to dice—for lost souls. At first they played for only a single condemned soul, but the game grew constantly hotter and the stakes larger, and before long the saint had won all the souls to be found in hell, and carried them off in triumph to heaven. When the devil at last returned and found the luckless player alone in his uncomfortable region, he fell into a great fury, but he couldn't change what had happened, and nothing was left for him to do except to ponder how he could repeople his infernal world with new souls. It is not wonderful that princes and magistrates, in order to bridle this madness for the dice-table, issued sharp ordinances and other legal regulations. As early as 952, the emperor Otho the Great, at the diet of Augsburg, notified the bishops, priests and deacons that they would be obliged to give up their offices unless they restrained their fondness for gaming. Later, in 1232, Frederick II published a severe statute against dice-players (*de aleatoribus*), and the pious St. Louis of France, who had many German subjects, forbade dice-play under heavy penalties to all the officials of his kingdom, and also prohibited the fabrication of dice. According to an ordinance of the municipal council of Strasburg, dated 1241, every one who was found, after the third stroke of the *wahteglocke*, or night-guard's bell (*post sonitum tertium campanae*), at play in a house or tavern, was to be arrested and punished. To these inhibitions and punishments, designed to cure the mania for play, were joined the anathemas of many of the mediæval lyrists and moralists. They regarded gaming, in its uncontrolled excesses, as an evil ruinous to both body and soul, and uttered many expressive words of warning against it. The same minnesinger, Reinmar von Zweter, whom we have already cited, calls the pleasure taken by his countrymen in playing dice a greed much stronger than the passions of love, of acquisition of property, or of drink:

> Ein schönes weib bezwingt den mann,
> Und ist dabei auch sünde, so ist doch kein wunder d'ran.
> Es zwingt ein schatz auch seinen knecht, dasz er in seinem Dienst musz steh'n.
> So zwingt ein herr auch wohl sein gut,
> Dasz es ihm dienen musz und leiden, was er mit ihm thut.
> Es zwingt des weines kraft den mann auch, dasz die sinne ihm vergehn,
> Doch weisz ich noch ein wunderbares zwingen,

Das wunderbar vor allen andern dingen:
Dasz einem todten würfel-knochen
Ein mann, der lebt, mit herz und sinn
In solcher gier sich giebt dahin,
Dasz ihm verstand musz werden abgesprochen.[165]

Wherever the word spiel is used by the mediæval and some of the later poets the reference is generally to dice-playing, as in that great codex of verse at Paris, known, from its supposed compiler, as the Mannes MS, in which an anonymous versifier says:

Beide, lotterie und spiel,
Bringen leib und seel' zu fall;
Wer maszlos ihnen folgen will,
Dem machen sie die hufen schmal.

And that didactic poet, Thomasin von Zircläre (about 1216), says almost the same thing in his distich:

Das spiel giebt hasz und zorn gar viel;
Gier und bosheit ist beim spiel.

We have already read Freidank's utterances on the game (p. 244); an even more famous rhymster, Sebastian Brant, who was in many respects a follower of Freidank, but who lived more than two centuries after him, employs this severe expression about gaming:

Spiel mag selten sein ohn' sind',
Ein spieler ist nicht Gottes kind;
Die spieler alle teufels sind.

But neither the decrees nor menaces of punishment issued by princes, nor the condemnations uttered by poets, could check the popular rage for dice-play, but both taverners and players submitted to heavy penalties rather than abandon their favorite vice. It is deserving of notice that in order to lesson the evil of the ordinary dice-game, Wibold, bishop of Cambray, then a city of the empire, invented as far back as 982, a dice-game, which, in an ingenious way, made the method of play indicate various ecclesiastical relations and institutions."

The author of this essay has comparatively little to say about back-gammon, in which the employment of dice is a much more innocent affair. He goes on, however, to tell us that "By the side of the pure dice-game existed other and different sorts of table-games ('jeux de table,' called, in middle High German, *zabelspile*). Amongst these was the 'wurfzabelspiel'

[165] The following is the old form of this modernized version of an interesting piece:

Daz schœniu wîp betwingent man,
Und ist dâ sünde bî, son ist dâ doch niht wunders an;
Sô twinget schatz ouch sînen kneht, alsô daz er im dienen muoz;
So twinget gnotes herre och gnot,
Daz er im dienen muoz unt liden, swaz er mit in tuot;
Sô twinget wînes kraft ouch sînen man, daz im wirt sinne buoz.
Dannoch weiz ich ein wunderlîchez twingen,
Daz wunderlîcher ist ob allen dingen:
Daz einem tôten würfelbeine
Ein lebende man herz unde muot
Sô gerlich undertænic tuot,
Daz ez im nimt sinne unde witze aleine.

tric-trac, our present puff. According to tradition the discovery of this was due to the knight Alco at the siege of Troy, which is indicated by the lines from 'Der Renner' (verse 11401):

Wurfzabel ich das spil auch nenne,
Daz vant ein ritter hiez Alco,
Vor Troye, des ist vil manger unfro
Worden und wirt leider noch,
Dem spil aufbindet des kumers noch. [166]

The *wurfzabel* (or backgammon) boards were, in general, very costly, especially when the various fields (or compartments and points) were filled with artistic inlaid work. The catalogue of the Munich art-exposition of 1876 describes (no. 2453) such a one discovered in the *mensa* of the altar of St. Valentine at the diocesan church of Aschaffenburg in 1852, in which it served [on account of its beauty, doubtless] the purpose of a reliquary. The unadorned points consist of pieces of veined red, oriental jasper, which is only polished on the upper surfaces, but on the sides, and below, is inlaid; the other points are overlaid with thick pieces of split or cloven and also inlaid rock-crystal, below which are small terra-cotta figures, variously painted with green, red, yellow, blue and white tints, lying on a gold ground. These represent partly twin-tailed sirens, partly dragon-like monsters, centaurs, and contests of beasts with men. The spaces between the points, as well as the borders and edges of the sides, are covered with very thin silver leaf laid on hard cement, in which foliage and other ornamental designs are impressed by means of metal stamps, which appear, looked at from the front, as if in high relief. The flowers and leaves on the two sides are enamelled in red, green and blue. At each side of the board is found a small division for holding the men now lacking, which were probably of chalcedony. The covers of these recipients are of rock-crystal adorned with silver. [167] The backgammon game was played [by no means always] with three dice, and the prizes of victory consisted mostly [hardly] in rings (*vingerlin*); only when ladies participated, did the loser have to submit to any penalty [?]. In relation to this it is said, in that bulky work, the 'Trojan war' of Konrad von Würzburg, which dates from the second half of the XIIIth century:

Dâ spilte mit der künigîn
Eintweder umber vingerlîn
Oder um senfte biuze [blows].

[166] The writer of the "Nord und Süd" paper didn't push his researches far enough to discover the blunder in this passage. The name of the inventor of the game rests in large part on a misprint, and possibly partly on the resemblance of the name to Attalus, one of the numerous mythical inventors of chess. The important lines of "Der Renner" run thus: *Noch ist eine leic spiel, des herren spulgent von dem doch vil sünden und vil schanden kumt etswenne: wurfzabel ich daz spil in nenne; daz vant ein ritter, hiez Alco vor Troie.*" The name of the knight is in the MSS *aleo*, a Latin appellative equivalent to *aleator*, meaning a dice-player. The original meaning therefore may have been that a dice-playing knight at the siege of Troy invented backgammon. But *aleo* is misprinted in both the editions of "Der Renner" (Frankfurt 1549 and Bamberg 1833). In the former it was printed *Albo* and in the latter *Alco*. The latter especially has hence become a "ghost-word" — the name of a supposed inventor of backgammon — who never existed.

[167] We have already called attention (p. 167) to richly-wought table-boards or backgammon boards in the museums of Nuremberg and other cities. To these may be added the many fine and costly specimens in the Historical Museum of Munich, and in the Museum of the Kings, housed in the Rosenborg palace at Copenhagen. But many other public and private collections contain them; they were a favorite object for the exercise of the craftsman's art.

Sometimes the stake was money, and in that case it was easy to lose considerable sums, whence the warnings against backgammon."

We now come to backgammon, its story in Germany, so far as we can make it out, and the methods of playing it in later and modern times. It has several names and not a few varieties. It will be remembered that the word *würfel* ("die") is old High German, and is first heard of in the XIth century. The oldest name for backgammon is *buf*—in its present form *der* (or *das*) *puff* or *das puffspiel*, which appears, for the first time, between 1272 and 1285, a century and a half or more after *würfel*—that is to say, just about the date at which king Alfonso in Spain was letting us know that two varieties of the game of tables were called *la bufa cortesia* and *la bufa de baldrac*.[168] In the course of time we read of many other appellations

[168] Since the allusions made in previous pages to the Alfonsine MS, through the great kindness of its owner, Mr. J. G. White, of Cleveland, Ohio, United States, a copy of that invaluable work has been carefully examined. This copy, as is stated, is not made directly from the original in the library of the Escurial (dated 1283), but from a not quite complete transcript of the year 1334, preserved in the library of the Madrid Historical society (Real Academia de la Historia). The White MS was transcribed in 1857 by that noted scholar, so well known to foreign students of Spanish literature, Don Pascal de Gayangos. In it, closely following the chess section, comes that entitled the "Libro de los Dados," in which are described various pure dice games under the titles of *el iuego de mayores*, *el iuego de la friga* (with three methods of play), *el iuego que llaman azar* [hazard], *el iuego de marlota*, *el iuego de la rifa*, *par con as*, *panquist*, *medio-azar*, *azar-pujado*, *guirguiesca* — the whole spoken of at the end as the "XII iuegos de los dados;" of these names it is perhaps proper to say that the Arabic word "azar" is the original of our English "hazard."

Thereupon comes the next book, under the title of the "Libro de las Tablas." (*Aqui comiença el libro de los iuegos de las tablas*). Afterwards follow diagrams of the different varieties of tables (or backgammon), with some short descriptions and the name of the particular game attached to each diagram. It is with these names that we shall particularly concern ourselves. After an introduction, we have a diagram, preceded by the words: "Este es el primer iuego que llaman *las quinze Tables*," followed by the diagram, under which we are told of this, or the next variety: "Este iuego llaman *los doze canes*, o *doze hermanos*." Thereafter we have other titles of games accompanied by diagrams: "Questo iuego llaman *doblet*;" "este es el iuego que llaman *fallas*;" "este es el iuego que llaman *seis dos è as*"; "este iuego llaman en Espanna *emperador*." Then occurs a head-line, "Qual es la barata deste iuego," describing a technical term found in later MSS: "La barata es quando el un iogador tiene meioria del otro, e tiene doze tablas entabladas, por que ell [sic] otro maguer entre non pueda salir, e de las otras tablas, que tiene a se de baxar, o façer y alguna a que dé. E quandol dá quatro tablas, o mas, el iuego baratado, per que puede levar sus tablas en salvo, o darle mas, se quisiere, e gana el iuego por este logar." The inscriptions under the subsequent diagrams are: "Este iuego llaman *el medio emperador*;" "este iuego llaman *la pareja de entrada*;" "otro iuego hay de tablas, q^{e} llaman *cab*, *equinal*;" "este iuego llaman *todas tablas*," "este iuego llaman *laquet*" (described, "laquet e siuegase con dos dados, e entablasse desta guisa"); "esto iuego llaman, en las otras tierras, *la bufa cortesia*;" "este iuego llaman *la bufa de baldrac*;" "este iuego llaman *los Romanos reencontrat*." The section closes with a vacant diagram, with one of the usual headlines above it: "E este es el departemento deste iuego — E esta es la figura del entablimiento," but nothing under it, showing an evident intention of continuing the treatise on tables, a feature of incompleteness common to Italian and other mediæval MSS on table-games; after the close of the section on tables we have other kinds of games. The first one is called "grande acedrez," on a 12×12 board, apparently played with the aid of triangular-faced dice (one side of one showing seven pips), in connection with which we are told that "Nos. rey Don Alfonso mandamos faeer dados" of many forms, of which specimens are given. One of the diagrams of this section represents a backgammon board, with seventeen men used by each player and containing some of these multiform dice; another portrays a circular backgammon board with six points (or houses) in each quadrant.

The next following section relates to the merelles varieties (*alquerque*), opening: "E començaremos primeramiente en ell Alquerque." In this paragraph is inserted the figure of a round backgammon, mentioned above, but it seems doubtful whether it belongs just here, but

applied to this table-game, or to its varying methods of play, some of them being, without doubt, nearly identical in their features. We have, for instance, *lurtsch* or *das lurtschspiel* (occurring in English, as we shall see, as "lurch"), *contrabuff*, *regalbuff* (*bouf royal*), *der lange puff*, *der konträre puff*, *toccadille* or *toccadiglio* (which we have heard of in Italian as "toccategli"), *trick-track*, or *dick-dack* or *tic-tac* (probably reaching Germany from France),

under it follows this: "Este es el alquerque de doze que iuega con todos sus trebeios," ... "segund aquellos tres sabios dieren la muestra el Rey e depues los departieren los omnes sabidores de iogar... queremos agora aque dezir de otros iuegos... Assi cimo los alquerques, que tannen al acedrez, e á las tablas, e á los dados. E tales y a que tannen al acedrez e á las tablas, e no a los dados." The first diagram is that of the "alquerque de doze" (apparently, as its name signifies, merelles played with twelve men). The board is that given by Brunet y Bellet, being composed of four simple morris boards united (see fig. 2, page 100), and, in the MS, is preceded by a longish description. Then we have, played on the same board, the title of a variety "El iuego que llaman *de cercar la liebre*;" and thereupon a second variety, into which dice are introduced "Este es el *alquerque de nueva* que se iuega con dados." It must be remembered that the arrangement of the matter in the MS is such that it is very difficult to decide, in many cases, whether the inscriptions refer to the preceding or the following diagram: though in general the latter seems to be the rule. At any rate the diagram following this last inscription, referring to the "alquerque de nueve" (that is, "morris of nine," being our "nine men morris," most likely) is that of the most common — perhaps older — morris board (see in this volume fig. 5, page 109), on which are portrayed nine upright (white?) pawns, and eight reversed (black) pawns — that is men resembling chess pawns in shape, partly "heads up," partly "heads down," all the angles, except seven, having men on them. After this comes the inscription, "De come se iuega ell *alquerque de nueve sin dados*," followed by the same diagram, with eight upright and eight reversed men. The morris-board, which we have spoken of as the ordinary one in America, having additional diagonal lines, starting from each corner (see fig. 4, page 108), was apparently not known to Alfonso, which confirms our belief that it is the younger of the two forms. The *alquerque* section closes with the simplest of the varieties, the "three men morris:" "Este es otro alquerque de tres" (that is "of three"), with a representation of the board (see fig. I, page 97), on which stand two reversed and three upright men. Finally follow various games, all having an astronomical look, in which the zodiacal signs and the planets are much to the fore, the first headline of the section being; "Este es tablero de los escaques, e de las tablas, que se iuga por astronomia" (it must be remembered that King Alfonso was a great astronomer); the volume ends with a seven-sided (or seven-parted, almost round-like) board, on which there are seven men standing on points along the transverse lines in each of the seven compartiments — that is forty nine pieces in all, of seven different colors. Later on these colors are explained as referring to the heavenly bodies, thus: "Saturno de negro. Jupiter de verde. Mars de vermelo. El Sol de amariello. Venus de violet. Mercurio de muchos colores diversas; la Luna bianca." Here may possibly be the origin of the terms *croce*, *stella*, *luna*, etc. (see page 105) applied in the mediæval manuscripts to the morris men.

Lack of space forbids the insertion here of much more than the above crude and unsatisfactory abstract of those portions of the Alfonsine codex in which we are just now interested. The "Libro de los tablas" begins with an extended description of the dice, the board, the men and their positions. We learn "que el tablero en que se an de iogar a de seer quadrado, e en medio a de aver sennal en guisa qne se fazan quatro quadras, e en cada quadra ha de aver seys casas, q^{e} se fazan per todas veynt e quatro." Of the men we are told: "E otrossi a mester que la meetad [sic] de las tablas sean duna color, e la otra meetad, dotra, por que sean conoscidas, unas dotras. E an a seer quinze de cada color por que en la una quadra de la meijtad del tablero, pueda poner en cada una casa dos dos, e ficar tres pora de fuera por baratar del iuego, e pora mannar, quando mester fuera. Ca sin estas no se podir fazer." The description of the variety called *doblet* is as follows: "Cada uno de los iogadores deve tener las doze tablas, e ponerlas dobladas, una sobre otra cada uno en su quadra del tablero, que sea la una en derecho de la otra; E el que venciere la datalla (?) lançara primiero. E devense baxar aquellas doze tablas, que estan sobre las otras, por las suertes de los puntos de los dados. E otrossi se devan levar; e el que las ante levar, ganará el iuego. Est si por aventura qualquiere de los iogadores lançare suerte, que non tenga tablas de que la fazar tan bien de baxarlas como de levarlas, develo fazer el otro iogador. E desta guisa (quisa?) avlene muchas vezes, que ganará ell un iogador por las suertes que

verkehren or *verkehrt*, *garanguet* (French), *gammon* (an English word), *revertier* (a French equivalent in meaning to *verkehren*), and so on. In several early writers are to be found longer or shorter lists of these back-gammon varieties (see that cited from Hans Sachs, p. 158, *note*), such as that in the statement of Johann Agricola, the compiler of the noted work on proverbs, the earliest edition of which appeared in 1529: "*Wir Deutschen*

lançara ell otro." It is plain from all this that this is the game called "doublets" in England in the eighteenth century, and in France "dames rabattues." In the midst of the description of the game called *fallas* (*fayles*, *failes*," see pages 87, 88) we are told the origin of the name: "E si fallasse que alli o el devie entrar, el otro avie entablado sos tablas, fallezrie que non podrie entrar, e perdiere el iuego por ello. Otrossi el que lançase en manera que no oviesse do ir sino en la casa que ell otro oviesse poblada perdiere el iuego per que falleçrie. Onde por esta razen llaman *fallas* à este iuego." Other words and phrases occurring in the descriptions of the games are: "e el que vence la batalla a la mano" [= first move?]; "en la casa del seys," "del dos" [on the six point, two point]; "en la del as" [on that of the ace, ace-point); "casa del cinco" "del quatro," "del tria." In the game known as *el medio emperador* we find that, as in the following Italian period, sometimes two, sometimes three dice were used: "E este se iuga en las dos quadras, e iugasse con dos dados, o con tres, mas non se barata como ell otro" [i. e. in the preceding game]. The game styled *todas tablas* is, as the description of the manner of placing the men at the beginning of the game shows, the French "toutes tables" and our ordinary English back-gammon; the diagram, too, agrees with the description. It is played with two dice. In the games called *la bufa cortesia* and *la bufa de baldrac* the descriptions throw no light on the exact signification, or genesis of the term *bufa*.

As to the origins of the three principal games treated by King Alfonso, the situation, so far as he is concerned, may be easily stated. In chess, the name of the game itself and not a few of its other technical words come immediately from the Arabic, and abundantly prove that the Iberian peninsula was indebted to its Moorish conquerors for the introduction of the Indian game. In the morris-game, its Spanish title, alquerque (owing especially to the *al-*) has an Arabic look, although no one has yet attempted to ascertain its precise Arabic source; the only other alternative is that the *al-* may possibly represent the Italian definite article, but it would be difficult to find any other instance of its use in Spanish as a prefix; the remaining element of the word, *-querque*, certainly strikes the eye and ear as rather Moorish than Latin, although this statement is, of course, of little philological weight. In the final group of games, those embraced under the name of *tablas* or "tables" there is absolutely nothing in the terminology to indicate the descent of "tables" from the Perso-Arabic "nard." There may, perhaps, be some slight doubt as to the word "bufa," but, if that be of Eastern origin, its parentage cannot be found in any description which we have of "nard." It may not therefore be a legitimate conclusion, but it is, perhaps, a natural one, that while chess certainly came to Spain from Arabia, and while merelles may have been known to its old Arabic population, the game of tables, if originally the Asiatic "nard," may well have reached the peninsula by the way of Italy or through some other romance nationality. In this connection it is to be noted that we have the expression, in describing the "bufa" variety: *este iuego llaman en las otras tierras* [in other countries] *la bufa cortesia*; considering the word "cortesia," this can only refer to one of the romance lands. — Since the preceding was written, a note from Mr. Guy Le Strange, the distinguished Arabic scholar, mentions the fact that in the Arabic dictionary of Kazirmirski *al querque* (or *al kirk*) is defined as an "espèce de jeu d'enfant, qui consiste à placer de petits cailloux dans chacune des cases d'une figure formée par le tracé de trois carrés concentriques divisés par deux lignes diagonales et deux rectangulaires." This describes exactly our figure 4 (p. 108), the morris-board still used at least in America (but which, as stated above, is not indicated in the Alfonsine MS). Mr. Le Strange adds that the lexicographer Dozy states that the modern Arabic name is *darys*. A still more important point is that *al querque* is mentioned in the "Kitāb al Aghāni," the author of which died in 967, more than three centuries before the date of King Alfonso's treatise; this ancient Arabic work describes a certain person as furnishing a room with shatranjāt, nardāt and *qirkāt*, that is, with boards for chess, back-gammon (*nard*) and merelles (morris). This is the more interesting because the writer thus early groups together the "triad of games," which make up the contents of so many mediæval MSS — at a far later period. This must be regarded as decisive of the fact that the morris game, like chess, reached Europe from the Arabs through Spain.

haben mancherlei spiel mit karten und mit würfeln, im bret, das gröst vor, dreierlei büf, büf regal, da man gibt den ganzen würfel, alle ses, alle zinken, alle quatuor, alle drei, alle taus, alle es, büf unden und oben, büf und siben zu rucke, das frawenspiel, das lang verkeret, das kurz und das lorzen, auch der dickedack." Some of these, which are evidently all backgammon games, it would be difficult, until after much investigation, to explain. Hans Sachs mentions only a portion of them: *das kurz, das lang, puf, gegenpuf, puf regal, dickedack* and *lurtsch*. The Swabian lexicographer, Schmid, quotes the passage, with an attempted etymology of *buf: Hier mahnt allerhand an französischen ursprung* (*buf oder bouf royal, tictac, tric trac*) *doch die benennung buf scheint daher zu rühren, dasz die fallenden würfel das bret stoszen, schlagen, einen buf geben*. Brachet, the French etymologist, claims that the French "bouf," meaning a "blow," "stroke," is onomatopoetic. Schmid ends by citing the Swabian conversational expression *alle buf*, meaning "every time." The lines from the anonymous writer known only as "The Schoolmaster of Eszlingen" (p. 158 *note*) are in full:

Der scharle hât driu spil verplicht
Das êrste spil ist buf genant,
Daz verlôs der prinz, er brach die bunde sâ ze hant.

Christian Hoffmannswaldau (1618-79), who opened a new period in German poetry, cites some of the backgammon games:

Dick dack und contra puff....
Disz solten unsre kurtz- und lange weile sein,

the last line containing an evident allusion to what Hans Sachs calls *das kurz, das lang*. The satirist Moscherosch (1601-69) edited Georg Gumpelzhaimer's "Gymnasma de exercitiis academicorum" (1652), in which the author says: *lurtsch spielen in alea primus modus est, das lurtschen, buff, contrabuff, regalbuff, dickedäcket*. A little known author, Wesenigk, who wrote a book entitled "Böse spielsieben" (1702), also enumerates some of these games: *Da ist im bretspiel das spiel aus und ein, das puffen, ticktack, lurtschspiel, verkehrtes, das interim*, u. s. w., in which we have the new title *das interim*, of which no German lexicographer attempts a definition. The same writer alludes again to *lurtschspiel*: "*Jener vater hatte seinen söhnen von dem lurtschspiel befohlen: ihr söhnigen, söhnigen, was ihr thut, behählt die 4. und 6. gut; welcher aber unter den spielern dieses nicht beobachtet, die haben sich arm gespielet.* Hans Sachs also mentions somewhere the German *lurtsch*:

Vorerst fach mir an das *lurzspiel!*

In Meyer's "Konversationslexikon" (1896), the writer on *puff* passes by all other kinds and notices only two: *Von verschiedenen durch besondere regeln bedingten variationen abgesehen, hat man zwei hauptarten des puffs zu unterscheiden: den langen puff, bei welchem beide spieler in demselben feld, im das zweite brett übergehen und schliesslich aus den andern felde des ersten brettes ihren auszug nehmen; und den konträren puff, bei welchem die spieler in den beiden gegenüberliegenden feldern desselben brettes einsetzen, sich im andern brett begegnen und ihre steine aus den entgegengesetzen feldern des ersten brettes herausnehmen*. The Brockhaus "Konversationslexikon" (1886) mentions only one kind of *puff*, and gives only a most general description of

that, more lucid, perhaps, than that of the previously cited cyclopædia, because its substance is little more than that the game is played between two persons on a board and by the aid of dice. Meyer (1889) describes *trick-track* as a game played on the *puffbret* and virtually the same as *puff*. In the same edition his description of *tokadille* [sic] is even more vague: *Ein aus Italien stammendes den puff verwandtes spiel, wird von zwei personen mit je 15 (auch 16) steinen gespielt, nach regeln, die auf denen des puffs beruhen, aber verwickelter sind und mehr abwechslung bieten als dieser.* We cite these passages merely to show that several of the old names of the various games still exist. The Meyer of 1897 has the word *toccategli* but refers to *tokadille*. Another game appellation, *verkehren* (*verkehrt*, the participial noun, is used less frequently), occurs among the poets, though perhaps at a less early date. Paul Fleming (1609-40), whose name at least is known to all American readers, and who lived not much longer than Keats, alludes to it:

> Ich bin zu zeitlich hier
> Doch gieb das bretspiel hier, und nim es an mit mir,
> Es gilt mir beydes gleich, verkehren oder dammen,

dammen being, of course, draughts. A later poet, but one, who during a long life enjoyed great popularity, is Christian Wernicke, who died about 1720. In one of his pieces of verse he says of one of his heroes:

> Thrax pflegt sich über viel geschäffer zu beschweren
> Und spielt doch manchen tag bis abend im verkehren.

We will now examine the names of the varieties of the modern games of tables in German, repeating as little as possible what has been said of these names elsewhere, that is, in treating of the French and Italian games. Of course the most notable of the names is *puff* (anciently *buf*) because of its possible relation to the historical development of the game. When we recall the fact that *bufa* is of frequent occurrence both in the Alphonsine Codex and in the very oldest Italian MSS, it is impossible not to doubt all the suggested derivations of the word, when applied to its relation to the backgammon board. Most lexicographers make it identical with the modern *puff* (the verb *puffen*, English "puff"), having the sense of "blow," "stroke," a "gentle blowing of wind," then a "blowing up," "puffing up by wind," and so on. The latest etymological authority, Kluge (6th ed. 1899), says that it is first used in modern High German, being properly, however, a low German word. Now either of these statements would preclude its connection with the Alphonsine and Italian *bufa*. For, first, it is hardly conceivable that *bufa* could have made its way from the Low German into the southern romance tongues, and, secondly, *buf*, as a nard-backgammon term, is older than the middle High German period. It is likewise notable that the Italian *buffo*, which has something like the signification of the German *puff*, a "windblowing," something "puffed up," is not only masculine in gender, but doubles its *f*, in both of which characteristics it differs from *bufa*. Again, it is difficult to believe that *buf*, as a backgammon word, does not come from south of the Alps, when we bear in mind the very frequent use of it by the old Italian writers on tables (*buf de as, buf de du, buf de terni, la buf in duobis taxillis*, and many others in the MSS of Rome and Flor-

ence). Now all this looks as if *bufa*, or *buf*, in Spanish and Italian, and *puff*, as the name given to German backgammon, may be another instance of the confusion of two words quite different in their origin, like the Icelandic *hnefi* (="fist," the Scotch "nief"), and *hnefi* in *hnefatafl*, the name of a game—which we have already discussed (p. 58). But we will quote the remarks of Kluge, premising that he omits the backgammon signification of the modern German *puff*—being possessed of the lexicographer's usual lack of knowledge of technical terms. His first sentence is a quotation from a previous authority: "*Die berührung der bedeutungen 'blasen' und 'schlagen' ist nicht ungewöhnlich, frz. 'souffler' und 'soufflet' liefen ein naheliegendes beispiel: die romanischen sprachen besitzen denselben wortstamm*" and he adds: "*ohne dasz entlehnung auf einer seite anzunehmen wäre: der stamm 'buf' kann als onomatopoietische schöpfung auf beiden gebieten unabhängig entstanden sein. Vgl. ital. 'buffo' (windstoss)—'buffetare' (schnauben), span. 'bofetada' (backenstreich).*" We have mentioned Brachet's opinion that the stem is of onomatopoetic origin. But the whole question is etymologically difficult, and cannot well be resolved until we have Italian and Spanish etymological dictionaries of a high character. As we have hinted, the history of *bufa* and *buf* has much to do with the story of the origin and development of the European "nard."

Of the other names, we have dwelt perhaps at sufficient length on "trictrac" (pp. 185-8) of which "triktrak" and "trique-traque" are only variations of orthography, and "tick-tack," "tiquetaque" possibly only variations of form. *Gammon* can only come from the English. *Verkehren* and *verkehrt* are presumably translations of the French *revertier*—which has been used, however, in German, in its French shape—although the word *reverquier*, occasionally found in French for *revertier* looks as if the borrowing might have been done by the French. *Lurtsch* is, again, most likely a loan-word from the English (which has it both as a noun and as a verb), or both the German *lurtsch* and the English "lurch" may be corruptions of some older and untraced vocable, having nothing to do with the English noun and verb in their usual signification. The reader will recall that "lurching" is cited as an English word in the British Museum mediæval Latin MS on tables (see p. 163). *Garanguet*, or, as one writer has it, *granguet*, we have already seen as a French term. All that can be said of *toccategli* (*tokkategli*, *tokadille*) has been said in a previous place (p. 224) except that one eighteenth century writer on the game, after explaining the commonly accepted origin of trictrac or *tictac*, asserts that *toccategli* expresses a similar idea, coming *von dem schlagen oder treffen der steine*, adding: *denn dieses italiänische wort will nichts anders sagen, als "berühret ihn," "schlaget ihn."* As to *lurtsch*, we may get more light on its origin when we come to treat the story of English backgammon.

As to the other technical words we shall here pass them over hastily, noticing, in general, only those which are peculiarly German. Of course, in the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries, in games, as in many other cases, French terms were greatly employed; nor have they been entirely lacking in more recent days. We thus find *jan* and its compounds, *plein*, *bredouille*, *débredouiller*, *point*, *partie*, *doublet*, not to speak of the names of the dice-pips and dice-doublets. As to the German terms, *pasch* has had a sufficient treatment. The "coin de repos," or farthest point in the outer table, is called *die huk*

or *die huke* (modern die *hucke* = "hay-stack," in its ordinary signification); and sometimes *die ruhe-ecke* (that is "le coin de repos"); *stein* is the customary word for "man;" *zunge* is used as a general name for each of the twenty-four "points" of the board; *der band* or *der bund*, applied rather to the men than to the point, means a double-point, that is the two or more men on any one point, and a man so standing, accompanied by another, is known as *ein gebundener stein;* on the other hand an exposed man is called *ein blosser*, like the English "blot," a term applied again to the man rather than to the point; *die binde* is sometimes the rendering of the French "jan," while the "petit jan" is translated occasionally by *schuster*, oder *das schustern*, and the "jan de retour" is *der rückjan;* "envoyé à l'école" is literally rendered as *in die schule geschickt; becher, or würfelbecher*, is the ordinary term for the dice-box; the fifth and sixth points of the entering or home-board are called *die bürgerlichen ecken;* the French "case du diable" is called, in one German treatise, *der teufelsband;* in casting the dice, if one fall on top of the other, or fall askew (not upright), they are said *zu brennen* ("to burn"); as in French, the men are sometimes designated as *holz* ("bois"). The absence of any descriptive treatise on backgammon before the XVIIth century makes this rough list of terms very unsatisfactory; such a treatise would doubtless give us many more indigenous technical expressions.

The German literature relating particularly to the method of playing backgammon is not very extensive, nor have we anything of a very early date; and this is true of the mediæval "tables" as well. The earliest special treatises on backgammon seem to be those found in the "Académie des jeux" class of books. It was at Paris in 1654 that the first of the "Académies" saw the light under the title of "La maison académique," compiled by a Sieur D. L. M(arinière). This was a score of years before Charles Cotton produced in England (London 1674) the first edition of a similar manual of social games, which he called "The compleat Gamester," and nearly a century before Edmund Hoyle gave to the world the original issue of his "Games" (London, probably in 1740), which still appears from time to time in England and America under the name of "Hoyle's games," but, of course, much changed in its character and contents. After several issues (the last at Lyons 1697), the compilation of Marinière (or was his name La Marinière, the *la* represented by *L* in his initials?) was finally superseded by the "Royal jeu de l'hombre" (Paris 1685), of which the editions were printed at Paris, the Hague, Brussels, Berlin, Amsterdam, the latest bearing the date of 1736. It was also issued in German, "Das neue königlich l'ombre," first of all at Hamburg in 1708, and thereafter, through the whole of that century down to the middle of the next, latterly at Lüneburg (the very latest edition having the date of 1845). The earliest German issue at this moment before us is that of Hamburg 1770 (pp. 360), apparently, though not numbered, the tenth edition—still styled "Das neue königlich l'ombre." The games at cards, billiards, chess and ball (being tennis and racket) occupy by far the larger part of the volume, followed by two backgammon games (pp. 292-360). The first of these has the title: *Das verkehren im brettspiel* (in numbered sections I-IX), the other being *Das trictrac oder toccateglispiel* (divided into chapters I-IX), the latter occupying the larger space. In beginning the former, the writer tells us that the game is named *verkehren* (the verb meaning to

"turn the wrong way," "invert," "reverse") because the player, thinking himself to have the best of positions, by some slight act of neglect or by an unlucky cast of the dice, finds it turned or converted (*verkehret*) into the worst. There are two methods of playing it, and the players must decide at the outset which they will adopt—either to carry on the game with only five single men (that is, "blots") or with only five double points. In the former case, each player must have played five men from the point on which his men are originally heaped or stacked, before being permitted to form a double point (*band*); in the latter, each player is allowed to make only five double points; but should he, by error or otherwise, make more than five they can be "hit" by his opponent as if they were only single. The fifteen men are placed, at the beginning, on the first point at the extreme left hand of each player's adversary, the point being called the *haus* or *mahl* (*mal*). A player may advance two men as far as is allowed by the number of pips on each die, or he may add the sum of the pips and move one man as many points as the combined pips amount to. Doublets are counted twice (two fives as four fives, for instance), and from one to four men may thus be moved on casting them. Blots may be hit and the captured men thrown out for re-entrance to the board (into the board, as it would seem, in which the player's *mal* was) in accordance with the throws of the dice. It would look as if only one captured man could be re-entered upon the same point, for the rule is laid down that, when a player has more men out than there are vacant places on which to enter them, he is said to be made a *junker*, or, as it might be expressed, to be "junkered." A player cannot play so long as he has men unentered. A player cannot form a double point on his opponent's side of the board, except on the *hucke*, which is described as the eleventh point from the *mal*. We have such irregularities in the gender and form of the name of this important point as are implied by the use of *diese hucke* in one paragraph and *in dem huck* in the next. In a player's own side, in both halves of the board, he makes his double points, moving them as far as possible unbroken from left to right, until he comes to the final throwing of them off. When the game has proceeded so far that one player has hit and thrown out so many of his adversary's men that the latter has no double points on his board, the former has won a "single," or "simple." When this state of things doesn't occur, then the player who has first thrown all his men off wins a "simple." If a player has captured so many men of the opponent's men, and his double points are so united that the latter can no longer find a point on which to re-enter, then the former wins a "double" and is said to become a *jahn* (Jean), or to be "john'd," as it has been styled in English in the same variety of backgammon (there called "verquere") in the "Compleat Gamester," as we have already noted (see p. 189). "Doubles" are also won in other ways. There are rules given about moving or throwing off men towards the end of the game, when they have all reached the fourth quarter, very similar to those applied in the ordinary English backgammon. The second treatise is on *trictrac* or *toccategli* (pp. 316-360). The text of this is virtually identical, except in respect to a certain typographical arrangement, with that forming a *brochure* (which we shall shortly notice), published separately three years later than the date of this issue of "L'hombre." The game described is, excepting a few modern alterations and additions, the "Grand

trictrac," or complicated French variety, which we have heretofore imperfectly described (pp. 180-182). The terminology is in general, either French (with the various *jans*) or a kind of French-German, like *marquiren, der marsch, marquirte points*. We find *partie débredouille, jan auf drey würfe, contrajan, jan von sechs blättern, doppeldoubletten, der jan der nicht kann, schulen machen, teufelsband, bürgerwinkel or bürgerhucke* (these last being the two points 5 and 6 nearest the bar, which might, perhaps, be roughly rendered "bar-points"). The compiler of this last essay begins by giving us some etymological information, a part of which we have learned before, declaring that *trictrac* is derived from two Greek words τρὶς and τραχὺς it being so called on account of the difficulty of mastering it. It is said by some to be more rightly designated *trictrac* or *tictac*, on account of the clatter made in playing it. Thereupon he gives the origin and meaning of the word *toccategli*, which we have recently cited. Whenever the *toccateglie* (as it is generally here written) variety differs from trictrac proper, the variation is stated in a foot note. After the first treatise on *verkehren* (pp. 308-314) follows a Dutch poem containing advice to the player (signed at the end by the initials "I. G. K."); it is accompanied by an anonymous German metrical version on opposite pages. This latter is here reproduced in a foot note.[169] The Dutch original will be given in treating backgammon in Holland.

[169] The title of the German translation is "Anweisung zum verkehren;" it comprises 58 lines (two more than are in the Dutch original):

Ihr freunde horet zu, liebhaber vom verkehren,
Hört meinen unterricht, und was ich euch will lehren,
Setzt fleiszig steine ab, wenn ihr das spiel anfangt,
Damit ihr in dem bret die ecke gleich erlangt.
Schlagt ohne vortheil nicht, wenn ihr gleich könnet reichen,
Man musz oft wiederum mit groszen schaden weichen.
Reiszt, wenn ihr schlagen könnt, sogleich die bände nicht,
Man bauet allzu schlecht, wo holz und grund gebricht.
Werft nicht, bis contrapart die steine hat gesetzet,
Wer speyt gern wieder aus, was ihn zuvor ergötzet,
Ein ander nimmt es gleich zu seinem vortheil ein,
Und lehret uns zu spät mit schaden klug zu seyn.
Halt eure bände fest, verlauft euch nicht zu weit,
Setzt nicht fünf steine blosz, wo nicht die noth gebeut:
Spielt redlich, sonder falsch, das unrecht soll hier passen,
So wie ihr euch es nicht wollt wiederfahren lassen.
Setzt sechs und viere gut, wie man doubletten macht,
Die cinquen sind nicht schlecht, nur nehmet euch in acht,
Allwo sie müssen stehn, imgleichen sechs und drey,
Was man nicht wehren kann, steht nicht zu setzen frey.
Bevor ihr werft, so seht, was gut und schlecht zu wagen,
Allsdann so spielet frisch und auch mit minderm zagen.
Ich hab es erst gelernt, da mir ein braver mann
Ein fäszchen butter leicht durch solches abgewan.
Setzt nicht verwägen aus, wenn ihr es anders könnet,
Sonst furchtet, dasz ihr selbst leicht ins gefangniaz rennet.
Doch könnt ihr sicher seyn, und lachet euch das glück,
So spielet, aber zieht bey noth auch wohl zurück.
Spielt einer euch zu klug; welch kluger wird sich wagen,
Mit einem starken kerl, sich ohne noth zu schlagen?
Und spielt ihr auf credit, so schreibt nicht zu geschwinde,
Dasz, wenn ihr auch verliert, man euch nicht zornig finde.
Beym credospielen kanns nicht sonder schaden seyn,

In a still earlier issue of *Das neue königliche l'hombre-spiel* (as it is styled on the title-page), that of Hamburg 1737 (supposed to be the fourth edition), the backgammon section, as afterwards, closes the volume (pp. 291-318). The first page of this part is in the shape of a bastard title: *Das verkehren im brettspiel recht und wohl zu spielen, samt denen grundregeln.* This is followed (292-6) by the Dutch poem, and (297-301) its translation, and then by a description of *verkehren*, textually the same as in the later issues. There is as yet no account of the *trictrac-toccategli* game, from which we may possibly conclude that the oldest German variety of the modern backgammon is *verkehren*. To this 1737 issue is prefixed a pretty copperplate frontispiece, in the style of the day, portraying groups of players at chess, cards, backgammon, billiards, tennis, the backgammon-board being precisely like the ordinary folding-ones of our own time.

Another edition of "Das neue königliche l'hombre," also under our eye, is that of Hamburg 1783, which, though stated, like the other one, on its title-page to be a *Neu verbesserte und vermehrte auflage*, exhibits few improvements and few additions. The edition is not numbered, but, according to the list published by Van der Linde, must be at least the 11th of the German series. So far especially as the backgammon pages are concerned, the modifications in the descriptions of the two games are very slight, but the Dutch poem, "Ordonantie op't verkeeren," as well as the German rendering of it, is omitted. The volume has a larger page (there are 275 in all), but the printing and paper are much inferior. The opening of the trictrac treatise varies somewhat in this issue, the etymological first paragraph being omitted: for it are substituted five lines stating the slight differences between *trictrac* and *toccategli*, abbreviated from the foot note to be mentioned in the next paragraph but one.

It may be well to mention that the oldest issue of the "Neue königliche l'hombre spiel," published, as we have stated, at Hamburg in 1708, has a

Deswegen thut es nicht, es sind zwey gegen ein.
Doch lasset den verdrusz nicht aus den augen spüren,
Man kann auch mit geduld oft was nach hause führen.
Schweigt, wenn ein ander spielt, es setzet nur verdrusz,
Wenn ihr zu andern sprecht, und ich verspielen musz.
Zumal, wann contrapart acht steine noch zurücke,
Und nichts verlaufen hat, so schweigt bey solchem glücke.
Ein kluger thut dabey viel besser, dasz er schweigt,
Und sich geruhig hält, als seine blösze zeigt.
Seht öfters in das buch, das heiszt: auf eure sachen.
So kann man alles leicht in zeiten richtig machen.
Seyd artig in dem spiel, modest in den manieren,
Und laszt, wenn ihr verspielt euch nicht den zorn verführen.
Ja flucht und schwöret nicht, seyd im gesichte frey;
Denn sauersehn ist schlecht, ob gleich erlaubt dabey.
Sprecht wohl von jedermann, er sey da oder nicht,
Und weil auch der gewinnst noch keine rent bersprieht,
So pralet nicht dabey, es trifft zum öftern ein,
Heut pflegt ein spieler reich und morgen arm zu seyn.
Und endlich wenn ihr spielt, so nehmt kein falsches geld,
Hingegen zahlt auch so, dasz es die wage hält.
Verkehren ist ein spiel, so edel und so werth,
Dasz, wer mit recht gewinnt, recht gute münz begehrt.
Indessen lebet wohl, ihr freunde von verkehren,
Und spielet nun geschickt, nach wohl gegebnen lehren.

frontispiece portraying, above, a tennis court with players, and, below, a round table at which five persons are engaged at cards; on the floor lie an open backgammon-board and other implements of games. The full title (in red and black) is (we retain the typographical features): "Das Neue Königliche l'Hombre Spiel, Auch wie Espadille Forçé, L'Hombre selb Ander, selb Dritte und selb Fünffen nach jetziger Manier zu spielen; wobey nebst noch andern Carten-Spielen beygefüget: Das Pilcken-Tafel, Das Schach, Das Ballen-Spiel, Und Das Verkehren im Brett. Mit Erklärung der Wörter, welcher man sich bey den Spielen gebrauchet.—Hamburg, Bey Benjamin Schillern, 1708." The unnumbered folio after the title-folio (that is the third) has the "Vorrede" and the "Innhalt." Then come "l'hombre" and other games, the pagination being irregular, as is sometimes the case with old books. It goes on all right to page 216, and then changes to 127 (in the middle of the section on "Ballen-Spiel"), and the new numeration continues to the final page 167 (which, properly, should be 267). In the course of the erroneous pagination occurs the division of backgammon. "Ballen-Spiel" ends on p. 135, with a blank reverse. The next page, [137] = 237, is a new title-page: "Das Verkehren Im Bret-Spiel Recht und wohl zu spielen, Samt denen Grund-Regeln. [Vignette]—Hamburg, Anno 1708." On the reverse of this the text opens (p. 138), with the poem, *Ordonnantie op't Verkeeren*, beginning:

Aen hoort Vrienden, aen hoort Beminders van't verkeeren,

ending at the bottom of page 143 [=243] with the initials "I. G. K." On page 144 follows its German version with a heading which we reproduce exactly: "Denen Liebhabern zum Vergnügen, hat man die Regeln folgender Gestalt ins Hochteutsche übersetzt." Hereupon succeeds the translation (with no hint of the translator's name) commencing:

Ihr Freunde höret zu, Liebhaber von Verkehren,

and ending on page 150 (=250) with a phrase in large type in order to fill a too-vacant space: *Mehres hievon findet der geneigte leser in folgenden zu seinem Unterricht.* After that follows (pages 151=251—167=267) the prose description of the game, precisely as in the edition of 1737, which we have already summarized. In this "Verkehren" portion there is likewise some irregular paginal numeration. After page 151 [=251] the numbers run 152, 143, 145, 151, 156, and then regularly to the end (143=153, 145=154, 151=155). The words, *verkehren im brett*, in the two title-pages, perhaps throw as much light on the origin of the name as can be gleaned by research. The verb *verkehren* means to "come and go," "pass and repass," "reverse," "invert;" "passing and repassing in the board," or "reversing in the board" may possibly be the original signification as nearly as we can define it. The second edition (Hamburg, Bey Benjamin's Schillers Wittwe 1715) has the same frontispiece. At the end of the title proper (after *gebrauchet*) is inserted this additional matter: "Mit möglichster Accuratesse nach der neuesten Frantzösischen Edition durchgesehen und an vielen Orten verbessert." The erroneous paging in the first part is repeated (which is singular, as the volume is wholly reprinted). The section devoted to backgammon is likewise newly printed but with its erroneous pagination corrected, and yet its special title-page still bears the date: "Anno 1708."

The volume ends with a supplement of 71 pages, with title-page and text in both French and German, containing the novel matter alluded to on the main title-page, being "Decisions novelles" relating to "l'hombre." The title-page to this bears the date of 1715. In this second edition the backgammon part is virtually unchanged; for the longer heading at the beginning of the German rendering of the Dutch poem, is substituted simply the words: "Teutsche Ubersetzung." With some regularity there was published at Berlin, from 1797 to 1820, an annual under the general title of *Spielalmanach*. This was under the editorship, first of one Julius Cäsar, secondly (beginning with 1810) of G. W. von Abenstein (both of which names Van der Linde declares to be pseudonyms). We add a description of one issue, which chances to be at our service. Its title is: "Spielalmanach für kartenschach-bret-billard-kegel-und ball-spieler zum selbstunterrichte von Julius Cäsar.—Nach den gründlichsten regeln und gesetzen durchaus verbessert und mit neuen spielen vermehrt von G. W. v. Abenstein.—παιδια των πονων ἡδυσμα Spiel ist die würze der arbeit. *Plutarch.*—Berlin, bei Gottfr. Hayn. 1810." This is the first volume of the continuation by "Abenstein" of the "Julius Cäsar" series of the "Spielalmanach." How far its contents are those of the preceding issues we cannot say. It comprises 396 pages, of which pages 322-345 are devoted to *das tokkateglispiel*. The first third of the article forms the *toccategli* portions of the "Hans Helling" *Buch der spiele*, on which we have commented—neglecting, however to say that the English word *match* is used, as we have found it used in another foreign language, to signify the highest kind of a winning, namely a "quadruple." "Helling" has been copied, as far as near the bottom of page 331. Thereafter we are presented with twenty-four numbered pieces of advice as to the proper playing of the game, of which we translate the earlier ones as specimens: 1. If, in the beginning, you throw dice with fewer than seven points [in all] try for the little *schuster* [that is, the little *jan*, or six combined double points in the home-board]. 2. But if your dice result in more than seven points, try for the possession of the *hucke* [that is the final or eleventh point from your massed men]. 3. Endeavour to form a barrier of six covered points in the second quarter of the board. 4. Prevent your adversary from making a barrier (*zumachen*), which can only be done by getting a double (covered) point in his board. These observations are all clearly written, and contain one or two noticeable points. Thus we learn, in the twenty-first paragraph, that when the dice run against a player, and he cannot unite a barrier of six adjoining covered points, the position is called an *enfilade*. Tables of the chances of throwing combinations of the different dice-numbers (pages 336-7), and observations on them (pages 338-40) then follow; thirteen numbered rules of play (*gesetze des tokkateglispieles*) terminate (pages 340-343) the section. The almanach is well-printed, and has on its cover-title a vignette showing a section of a billiard-table, with cues, cards, chess-men etc. lying upon it.

The following anonymous pubblication must be here briefly noticed: "Neueste anleitung wie die trictrac und toccateglie-spiele recht und wohl zu spielen. — Mit allergnädigsten privilegiis. — Nürnberg, bey Johann Eberhard Zeh, 1773." It is a small octavo of 48 pages. To the end of page 46, it seems (with two slight exceptions) word for word the same as the treatise on the same game, or games, in the "L'hombre" book of 1770. The first difference

is a foot-note to the first page of the text as follows: *Das trictrac, oder wie man es auch sonsten nennet grand trictrac, ist von dem toccategli-spiel in vielen unterschieden, und muss also mit selbigen nicht vermenget werden. Dann, so unterscheidet sich dieses von jenem 1. in schlagen, 2. zählen oder merken, und 3. im fortrücken oder bande machen, wie unten bey gelegenheit hin und wieder, wo es von dem trictrac abgehet, angemerket werden soll. Dann ausser diesen dreyen stücken wird es gespielt wie das trictrac.* The other distinguishable feature of the "Neue anleitung" is that here the small dissimilarities between the two varieties, mentioned on the title-page, are described in more or less brief paragraphs inserted here and there, in smaller type, in the text. The text is mainly occupied with *trictrac*, but whenever a feature occurs, which is not exactly the same in *toccategli*, the difference in character, or in the method of play, is explained in these inserted notes. As we have given the reader to understand, these little toccategli notes, in both the 1770 and 1783 editions of "L'hombre" are remanded to the bottoms of the pages. The last two pages (47-8) of the work are occupied (probably in order to fill the unused space), with an account of the Italian "mora," here named *das fingerspiel*, which is called both *ein besonderes spiel* and *dieses lächerliche spiel*. What are the real relations between the essay which forms the substance of this volume, and the almost identical essay in *Das neue königliche l'hombre*, cannot, in the present state of our knowledge, be decided. Perhaps there may have been an earlier edition of the little book, which was subsequently made a part of "L'hombre;" or perhaps the publisher or editor of the book wanted to produce a volume solely devoted to what he conceived to be the principal game of backgammon, and found the easiest way to do that was to reprint the *trictrac-toccategli* section of the German "académie."

The next German work devoted specially to backgammon is of a higher character than any of those heretofore described. Its title is: "Zwei brettspiele. — Das toccategli- und das gammon-spiel. — Lüneburg, im verlage von Herold und Wahlstab. 1804" — an octavo of XVI, 147 pages, besides a page of errata and a folding-plate. It is dedicated by the nameless author to the Gerichtswalter von Bremen zu Beverstedt, his frequent adversary at backgammon. It is preceded (pp. III-XI) by an introduction of considerable interest. After some praise of *toccategli- oder wie man gewöhnlich zu sprechen pflegt, toccadille-spiel*, and some answers to those who criticize or condemn it, the author states that he has been unable to find, in any language known to him, a clear and comprehensible guide to the game. He then says that *Alles was ich in büchern oder almanachen u. s. w. die anleitungen zu spielen enthalten, davon findet, ist grösstentheils nichts anders als ein aus verwechselung, vermischung und verwirrung der regeln des französischen trictrac mit denen des toccategli entstanden, mir, und jeden toccategli-spieler dessen urtheil darüber zu hören ich gelegenheit hatte, unverständliches chaos.* For this reason he has decided to compile a new manual. After explaining his method of describing the game, he states, in the final paragraph (VIII) of his introduction, his reasons for also giving an account of the game of *gammon*. We translate: "I have added a short explanation of another table-game less generally known in Germany, which, however, gives entertainment to the Englishman, so venturesome and so sagacious in his sports, as well as to the less active Portuguese, Spaniard and Italian. It may be that its name

at least is not so unknown to us Germans, since it was the favorite diversion of the good Primrose, the rural clergyman of Wakefield." He closes by saying that *gammon* is an easier game than *toccategli*, and does not admit the number of changes which are constantly taking place in the latter variety; and he has therefore been able to fully explain it in much less space than he has felt obliged to give to its more elaborate rival. The style of the book is clear, grave and pleasing; the arrangement of the matter is excellent; and the typography is very neat. In the essay on *toccategli* hardly any French terms are used, the "jans," "bredouiller" and so on having disappeared. The author's intelligence is manifest in many ways, in none more noticeably than in his knowledge that our English backgammon (*toutes tables*) is much played in Portugal and Spain; we have, in another place, called attention to the fact that one of the most frequent Portuguese names of backgammon, *gamão*, is derived from the English "gammon." Another indication of his superior capacity (much in advance of his generation) is the record (pp. 141-147), with critical notes, of three games of *gammon*, or English backgammon, by means of a simple and easy method of notation akin to that employed in Germany for writing down games of chess. Even yet — a century later — no manual treating backgammon, published anywhere in the English-speaking world, has published records of games at backgammon, or suggested the possibility of such a thing.

There are issued, we believe, in the German lands, from time to time, small and indifferently compiled manuals devoted to table, social and other games. Some pass through many editions, being often stereotyped. In that case, to conceal the fact that they are not fresh publications they are very generally undated. One such chances to be available for a hasty description. It is called: *Buch der spiele gesellschaftspiele im zimmer und im freien fur gewachsene und kinder. Von Hans Helling. Berlin*, without date. It is a fair sized octavo of 128 pages, selling for a single mark. Two backgammon varieties are here described (pp. 7-13), and there is a very crude wood-cut of a board. The first game is named *puff*. This resembles the game known as "Russian backgammon" in England and America. It is likewise played in Germany, as we shall shortly see. This *puff* is doubtless meant for it, but differs in one or two of the minor rules, as is apt to be the case in different lands in nearly all table games, except possibly chess, in which the same laws and methods now prevail at least in all European countries and in their colonies. It is singular, however, that the oldest German appellation for backgammon (*puff*, or *puffspiel*) should here be bestowed upon a variety, which is generally regarded as modern, and appears to be comparatively little known to the Latin world. The other variety treated in this little handbook is *tokkategli*. The account is rather meagre, but we have many of the terms with which we have already become familiar, partly half-foreign: the old names of the doublets, as *bezet* or *ambesas*, *double deux*, *ternes* and so on; die *hucke* oder *ruhecke; spielmarke* (instead of the French "marquer"), a metal token for marking the game; *blosse* ("blots"), single men standing on points; *doublette* (instead of *pasch*, used in describing the previous variety); *schuster* or *der kleine jan*; *der grosse jan*; *rückjan*; and *band* ("covered point," whereas the "double point," which is the same thing, is denominated *ein bund* in the account of *puff*). We translate a few of the rules and definitions to show its resemblance to the *Grand trictrac*, treated in the French

backgammon section of this volume: "The counting [with the spielmarke] takes place when I have hit a blot; I then make one on the board by placing my 'marker' in front of the head of the first point in my second compartment, advancing it one with every blot hit; if I have passed the 'marker' through my twelve points, and my opponent has hit no blot, then I have won a 'quadruple;' has he meanwhile hit a blot once or twice, then I win a 'triple,' if three or four times then I gain only a 'double,' if seven times then I can only count a 'simple.' If a player has thus marked twelve then it rests with him whether the game shall be continued or not. If a player hits a blot with doublets, the 'marker' is advanced two more points. One cannot occupy the adversary's 'coin de repose' (*hucke*) with a single man; it can only be occupied by two men, either by means of a doublet, or by two men, which, in accordance with the dice thrown, can be moved thither at once. If I have established in my second board six successive double points (*geschlossene bände*), called a *schuster*, or 'the little jan,' or 'the little closure' (*zumachen*), then I mark two, and this with every throw of my opponent until I am obliged to break up my six double points. The second board, or compartment of the opponent is called 'the great jan,' and his first board 'the counter jan' (*rückjan*). Into the second field of my adversary I cannot place a single man ('blot'), so long as he maintains what is styled his *force*, that is, so long as he can make six successive double points with his men." These sentences, made at random, prove that the game is that known in France as "tric-trac," having all the complicated features of that variety.

One of the best of the more recent German handbooks of games bears the long title: *Buch der spiel. Encyklopädie sämtlicher bekannten spiele und unterhaltungs-weisen für alle kreise. Gesellschafts- und scherzspiele aller art, orakelspiele, ball- und reifenspiele, sportspiele, kegelspiele, tanzspiele, domino und lotto, brett- und positionspiele, schachspiel, billardspiel, würfel- und kartenspiel, patiencen und kartenkunststücke u. s. w. Herausgegeben unter mitwirkung erfahrener fachmönner von Alban von Hahn. Dritte auflage. Mit 277 abbildungen. Leipzig. Verlag von Otto Spamer.* 1900. This third edition (the first appeared in 1894) is a good-sized octavo of XIV + 507 pages, well printed, well arranged, well indexed, and in some parts well illustrated. Notwithstanding its assertion to the contrary on the title-page, it can hardly be possible that experienced experts, of the first class, have contributed greatly to improve its backgammon section, which, it may also be stated, has not a single illustration, not even a cut of the backgammon-board. The section is, in many respects, behind that devoted to merelles (*das mühlespiel*), of which we have given some account (pp. 145-6). It contains descriptions (pp. 256-266), of varieties bearing the names of *das lange puff, triktrak, garanguet, tokkategli* (*tokkadille*), *gammon, revertier*—a list which may be regarded as summing up all the methods of playing this ancient table-game now practiced among the German nationalities. The first game is *das lange puff* and is virtually the same as *puff* in the *Buch der spiele* of Helling, just noticed, that is the "Russian backgammon." The description is here fuller and more exact. The backgammon board is spoken of as "the *puffbret* usually found in the inner side of the well-known draught-board," the allusion being to the folding chess-board, on the inside of which is a backgammon board. To decide on the beginner both parties

cast the two dice, and the higher number confers the privilege of the first play. This throw is called *general-pasch* and must be marked down, since its recurrence later gives the thrower a special indulgence, as will hereafter be explained. The men are entered in accordance with the numbers of dice-pips turned up. The play commences in the field at the remote left of one player and at the remote right of the other. The men of neither player can be moved until they are all entered. Thereafter the player may move two men according to the pips of each die, or one man according to the sum of the pips. When doublets are thrown, they may be played twice, then the doublets on the other side are played twice, whereupon the player is also entitled to another cast. Should *general-pasch* be thrown by either player he may then also play the exposed pips twice, and afterwards the pips on the opposite sides of the dice likewise twice. Blots may be hit, though in such a way that the capturing man, which takes the place of the captured and consequently thrown-out piece, must remain on the point from which the captured man has been removed, and cannot be advanced further until the next cast of the dice. The captured man must be re-entered on the entering board, and until this be done the player to whom it pertains cannot move any of his men. A double point (with two men) is called a *bund*. If a player have five *bünde* adjoining each other, his opponent can only pass the row with double sixes, (*sechs-pásch*), since the lower number on the dice must be first played; therefore five-six, for instance, will not permit him to pass his man over the united *bünde*. Arriving at the fourth field, the men are thrown off, in accordance with the pips turned up, and the player whose men are first off the board wins. The writer states that another method of playing this variety consists in both players entering their men in the same table, moving in the same direction and throwing them out in the same quarter of the board, lying opposite, of course, to that in which they started. This mode, in consequence of the obstacles offered by the double points (*bünde*) of each player to the movements of the other, and by reason of the more frequent captures of men, is more lively and interesting than the other, and demands greater forethought and more careful planning. Whether this game be the same as that styled "the long," or *der lange puff*, by writers of the XVIth and XVIIth centuries whom we have cited, is not to be easily determined. If it be, then what we have mentioned as the quite modern "Russian game" (not so named, so far as we are informed, outside of America) must be of greater antiquity than we have supposed. The second game is the "grand trictrac;" the description is a good specimen of condensation, the terms largely French, sometimes translated. The writer speaks of one of the "jans" as der *rekompensejan oder der jan der belohnung*, and also of *berührtes holz, in bredouille sein*, and the *grosse bredouille*. At the end is a serviceable *wurftabelle des triktrak*, skowing the points to be marked at all the possible turns of the game. The section concludes by saying that in *trictrac* "quick observation and exact calculation and combination of all possibilities" are essential. The third variety is *garanguet*, which we have already briefly described (p. 182). The fourth is *tokkategli* (*tokkadille*), the compiler confining himself to the few differences which distinguish it from *triktrak*, upon which we have previously dwelt (p. 265). The fifth is *gammon*, the rules given varying slightly but not materially from those laid down for the customary English game, which variations

have been previously noted. The sixth and last game is *revertier* (that is, *verkehren*), the description of which coincides with that in the three issues of *Das konigliche l'hombre*, which we have examined. The regulation requiring beforehand the choice of one of two methods of play is here omitted, and the terms *jan* and *junker* are not employed. There is no mention of the fact that this variety of backgammon is, or has been called in German *verkehren*. In fact there is no historical or literary information in regard to any of the table-games included in the volume, except in the four or five pages of introductory matter to the section devoted to chess. But the same may be said in regard to the articles on other table games in all the cyclopædias, in whatever language or country they may have been published. In fact, as has been hinted, no histories of backgammon or the morris-game could have been heretofore written, because nobody has taken the pains to study or to read those portions of the many Latin, Spanish, Italian and French manuscripts in the great libraries, which treat of those games in common with chess. They have been made use of only by writers on the story of chess. As for the minor old games, like draughts and fox-and-geese, very little has been written on the origin and development of the former, and nothing in reference to the latter. Even the folklorist, to whose province the study of these more popular games, of such wide extent, properly belongs, has not devoted much time or thought to them. There is, we must not forget to say, another manual of games in German, like the one which we have just reviewed, which claims to be especially historical. The copy we are consulting, as will be noted, is of the fifth (and latest) edition. We reproduce its long title: "Encyklopädie der spiele enthaltend die bekanntesten karten-, brett-, kegel-, billard-, ball-, rasen-, würfelspiele und schach. Gründliche anweisung zur erlerning dieser spiele, nebst angabe ihres geschichtlichen ursprungs. Mit einer geschichtlichen einleitung, Von Friedrich Anton.—Fünfte Auflage.—Leipzig verlag von Otto Wigand. 1889." It is arranged not by classes of games, cards, table-games and so on, but alphabetically in a real cyclopædic style. It looks very complete, for it not only includes draughts and merelles (*mühle*), but such games as the Japanese "go" and the Italian "mora." It deserves some credit, too, as the first book of its class, which even affects to treat its subjects historically. It opens with a general introduction of ten pages on gaming, in which the laws against it from very early times are hastily glanced at. After this there is a chapter, with many historical references, on "cards as the most important means of playing or gaming" (*Die karten als wichtiges spielmittel*); this includes a brief sketch of the introduction of cards into Europe, the different character of those first used in different lands, and explanations of the origin and signification of the names given to the four suits (hearts, clubs etc.); this is followed by a note on the technical terms common to most card-games. This is pretty much the sum of all the historical matter contained in the book. Now and then the opening line, or lines, of a section contain an attempt at the historical, such as the first phrase of the section occupied with *tokkadille*: "*Die aus Italien stammende tokkadille wird auf dem puffbrett gespielt*," and that's the whole history of *tokkadille*. The longest introduction in the body of the book is that prefixed to *trictrac*—being a page devoted *zur geschichte des trictracs*, all about the Phoenicians, the abbé Barthelémy, the Greeks and Romans, the contention

of Germany and France for the honour of the game's invention, the origin of its name—but nothing showing any research beyond the pages of the nearest cyclopædia. The backgammon varieties treated we glance at in their order: *gammon* (pp. 219-222) comes from England (*stammt aus England*), was, however, played for a time in France under the obsolete name of "toutes-tables"—but not a word about its revival in that country; the game is still a favorite in England. This is more than an averagely fair specimen of the book's endeavors to write history. After it follows an abridged description of the game. *Garanguet* occupies ten lines (p. 222); it is played with three dice; if the dice show a doublet (*ein pasch*) it is played doubly, but only when the sum of its points are greater than those of the third die. *Jacquet* (p. 295), fifteen lines in all; each player places his men on the corner point at the right in the opposite board; the player must continue to carry forward his men until they have reached the table opposite that in which they were originally placed: then he can play as he pleases, although it is difficult to imagine in what this liberty consists other than bearing his men. *Puff* (pp. 403-5); it is spoken of as *das beliebte puff;* the description is of the briefest, being less than two pages, beginning with a word or two on the difference between *das lange puff* and *das contrăre*. *Revertier* (pp. 428-432); etymology, Latin "revertere;" names of the doublets; the mass of the men entered on the first point of the board, on beginning the game, is styled *der haufen*, "the heap;" the final (eleventh) point in that board is known as *der kopf*, "the head;" *päsche* is used as the plural of *pasch;* *überbänder* seem to be the men above two on covered points, but they are also called *matadors*, since they serve to attack the opponent's blots without making a blot on one's own point; finally the method of bearing the men and finishing the game is described in some detail. *Tokkadille* (pp. 583-586) comes from Italy: it is played with thirty men, sometimes with thirty-two; the latter resembles the former, but is more risky especially by reason of the *continuation*, which is the privilege of going on with a game, after having scored twelve points (really a game) by crossing over into the enemy's board, and keeping up the play there for a more complete victory; particularly important is the formation of barriers of six continuous covered points, preventing the opponent's advance; as in the "grand trictrac," which *tokkadille* so closely resembles, the rules and methods of marking the scores are very complicated; the *hucke*, which can only be occupied by moving into it two men at once, plays a great rôle. *Trictrac* (pp. 593-622), occupies two thirds of the whole backgammon space; the description of the game is quite full, with the French terms partly translated, as usual; a point on the board is called *pfeil*, "arrow; the customary romance names for the doublets are employed, except that deuces are styled *döppelzwei;* French, too, are many of the names of the *jans*, of the *talon*, *bredouille*, *enfilade:* some of the explanations are new and clearer as: *man nennt den kleinen jan die erste tafel oder abtheilung, in welcher die steine aufgestellt werden, weil man darin den kleinen jan oder kleinen voll* ("plein") *macht*, and so with the *grosse jan* and *grosse voll; vergeltungs-jan* or *belonungs-jan* are both employed for the French "jan de recompense;" *blank* signifies a "blot;" there is the customary table (pp. 619-10) of the points to be scored for the different operations on the board (*tarif über die würfe*); besides the *teufelsband*, another covered point, which is valuable to make with the

early throws of the dice, is the tenth point (counting from the *talon*), because it enables the player to check, in many ways, the movements of the adversary and is hence named the "double point of observation" (*observationsband*); this is sometimes known as the *Travanisband*, because the marquis de Travanis, a very strong trictrac player, was the first, under certain circumstances of the game, to establish this point, in opposition to the rules and practice prevailing in his day, and thereby won considerable sums. The earlier players were wont to leave this point uncovered to the last, or to a later stage of the game, and styled it the "scholar's point" (*schülerband*). It is probable that this division of the book is a translation, more than usually well-made, from some French manual, with rather too many of the French terms left ungermanized. The whole "Encyklopädie," with its 650 pages, was well-planned, but the editor lacked both the ability and proper assistance to carry out properly his design. The illustrations are very scanty and of meagre quality. The "Buch der Spiele" of von Hahn is not only newer but superior.

Before bringing to an end the rough sketch here given of the forms assumed by nard-tables-backgammon in Germany we ought to say a word on the lack of productions, in general German literature, in which this diversion is made to play a part. We have in Italian the backgammon episode in Parini's "Giorno," and in French the novelette of Merrimée, but there is nothing in German, so far as we know, which compares with them; and yet the game has been quite as common among the Germans as among their neighbours. There is indeed an early German version of Parini's poem, which must be of considerable rarity, since in the three or four German book-collections in which we have sought it, the volume was not to be had.[170]

Of the history and practice of backgammon in Holland, a country very nearly akin to Germany, little can be said without more extended researches than the writer has been able to make. The story of the game must have run here very much as in Germany. The mediæval tables was probably played, and references to it doubtless occur in the popular epics, the knightly verse, the *chanson de geste*, the dramas, the satires, and the moralizing pieces, which were as numerous during the early centuries in the lower regions of the Rhine as in the upper. The game has been very likely influenced both by France and Germany. From the former it got the name of one if its two most common varieties, and from Germany that of the other. These seem to be *tiktak* (*trik-trak* is not to be found in most of the dictionaries) and *verkeer* (*verkeerspel*). One noticeable thing is that both these words occur as verbs as well as nouns. *Tiktakken* means to play at *tiktak*, and *verkeeren* signifies to play the *verkeerspel*; this linguistic peculiarity extends to other games, *schaaken* (from *schaak*, *schaakspel*) is "to play chess." and *dammen* (from *dam*, *damspel*) is "to play at draughts." How much these verbal forms are now used may be a matter of doubt, but they were common enough two or three generations ago. The names of the backgammon accessories are: *tiktakbord*, *verkeerbord*, or simply *spelbord*; *streep* (etymologically "strip" or "stripe") is the only word we have found to indicate the twenty four "points" of the backgammon table; *taerling* (*taerlingk*)

[170] Its title is: *Die vier tageszeiten in der stadt, eine freie übersetzung aus dem italiäni-schen. Frankfurt am Main* 1778. The translation is apparently anonymous.

plural, *taerlingen* = *die*, *dice*, a low German word with a slightly different orthography in the Scandinavian branch of the family; but a more common term appears to be *dobbelsteen*, compounded of *dobbel* (*dobbel-spil*) the original appellation of "the dice-game" and *steen* ("stone"). To throw (dice) is *werpen*, the German "werfen," *gooijen* or *smakken;* the dice-box has, according to the lexicographers, various names, some of which may very well be obsolete: *dobbelhoorn* (*hoorn* = "horn"), *smaakhorntje*, a diminutive, *dobbelbeker* (*beker* = "beaker"), *dobbelkrues* (*krues* meaning "cup"). *Ooge* (plural *oogen*), literally "eye" (or sometimes *stip*, "dot") is, like its congener in German, applied to the pips of the dice. The names of the pips are, except *aas*, "ace," the same as the numerals, *twee*, *drie*, *vier*, *vijf*, *zes*. *Dubblet* (pl. *dubbletten*), from the French, is "doublet," but the special names for the doublets do not seem to have been introduced into Holland, although the French forms may have been used, with other French terms (as in Germany and Italy), by practised players in the cities, but, as in England, *dubbel aas*, *dubbel twee* and so on are general. *Passedix* and *passedisje* are cited as the equivalent of *pasch*, but are not frequent, *dubbletten* (as in England and America, "doublets") being apparently the customary term. *Dobbel* is the German *doppel*, and was early applied to the dice-game proper, and like that ultimately meant "gambling;" *dobbelen* is "to play at dice," "to dice;" *dobbeltafel*, is "dice-table," gambling table," while *dobbelbord* is even more common; *dobbelaar*, *dobbelaarster* = "dice-player," "dicer;" *dobbelaarij* = dicing; while we have already cited *dobbelsteen*.

There are, in Dutch, as in other languages, numerous phrases and proverbs derivable from the dice, the board and the game. It may be premised that *spel*, unless qualified, usually, means "dice gaming" or "gambling," and "bord" usually refers to the "board" of a table game. "*Twee aasen gooijen*" is, as already stated, "to throw ambesas," "double aces," and *twee vieren* is "double fours" ("carmes"); *van den dobbel houden*, "to be devoted to gaming;" *hij gooijd niet als dubbletten*, "he throws nothing but doublets;" *in het bord spelen*, "to play backgammon;" *de beurt winnen*, "to win the first throw;" *gooijen om de beurt*, "to throw for first play" — *beurt* signifying "turn," "chance" (French "tour"). The following are generally used figuratively or proverbially: *de taerlingk is geworpen*, "the die is cast;" *tegen twaalf oogen dobbelen*, "to play against double sixes," "to play a desperate game;" *zig van de galg vry dobbelen*, "to save one's self by luck;" *ik weet wat op die taerlingk loopt*, "I know what I risk," or "what I am about;" *ik heb hooge oogen gegooijd*, "I have had great luck;" *dertien oogen gooijen* = "to have an impossible piece of luck." Of technical terms at play, *band* (plural *banden*) is "a double point" (French "case"); *werkeertje* appears to mean "partie" at backgammon; *falsche dobbelsteenen* are "loaded dice;" *schijf* (plural "schijven") is "man," often called *damschijf*, "draughtman."

Few are the references in the poets and other writers to backgammon or dice which we have been able to gather, but they would probably be found to be numerous enough on investigation. Coenrad Droste (1642-1733), hardly a great poet but a man of learning, says in his "Reminiscences" ("Overblijfsels"):

> Eens speelden wy verkeeren,
> Ik... speelden altyt voort, tot d'een of d'andre sag,
> Dat midden in het bord iets by de banden lag.

A little earlier in time the following passage is found in the first volume (p. 136) of a work of travels (1698-1711) in the Levant, Russia and as far as India, probably referring to the Mediterranean east. The author is Cornelis de Bruyn, deceased about 1719: "De manier van speelen [op het verkeerbord] is dezelve als by ons, maar met dit onderschied dat men zyn party niet geheel uit het bord kan sla an, maar altyd plaats moet laaten om te konnen aangaan." The difference here implied between Dutch and eastern backgammon is not easy to comprehend. The next quotation relates to the dice-game, and is from the romance "Akbar" by P. A. S. Limburg Brouwer (1829-73), the son of a more famous father: "Hier en daar zaten... de spelers met hunne dobbelsteenen om het bord waarop ze hun inzet hadden gewagt." Willem Bilderdijk (1756-31) is generally reckoned to be Holland's greatest poet. In one of his pieces of verse backgammon (rather than dice-play) seems to be referred to:

> Daar hoor ik 't rammlend spel, waarby 't behendig gissen
> De onzekre kansen raamt, die van het lot beslissen.
> Het oog staart wederzijds in 't opgeslagen bord,
> Met gretige ijverzucht, naar 't geen de beker stort.

A minor writer, whose name is apparently Schimmel, is cited by one of the lexicographers, the passage given being from a story: "Harry maakte de opmerking dat de oogen van de dobbelsteenen op sommigen meer invloed uitoefenden dan de schmachtende blikken eener schoone."

We have reproduced on a preceding page the German rendering of a longish poem devoted wholly to one of the games (*verkeeren*) played on the backgammon-board in Holland. Here follows the Dutch original, styled, as the reader will remember, *Ordonnantie op 't verkeeren*, "Directions for backgammon," which we copy as it is given in *Das neue königliche l'hombre* of 1770 (pp. 308, 310, 312, 314). The full name of its author ("I. G. K.") we have not been able to discover. It is proper to say that in these extracts, as well as in the Dutch words and phrases cited, we have followed the orthography used in our authorities. This results in many discrepancies, since some are older and some younger than the orthographical changes effected by Bilderdijk—not one of the least of the services which he rendered to his country. The writer of our poem, it will be noticed, introduces many of the technical terms of the game:

> Aen hoort vrienden, aen hoort beminders van't verkeeren
> Myn ordonnancy, ende let op't gheen 'k u sal leeren:
> Als ghy u speel begint, set schyven af en maeckt
> U meester van den hoeck: al ist dat ghy oock raeckt,
> En wilt niet haestig schlaen, ten zy met avantage:
> En bandt oock niet te ras, 't is quade timerage
> Als men gheen hout en heeft: werpt niet eer u party
> Syn schyven heeft geset, want selden is men bly
> Als men teert eet, 't heeft my dickwils oock wel ghespeten,
> Daerom speelt met ghenenght, gheeft niemandt daervan te eten.
> Hout u banden by ech, vorloopt niet dan uyt noot,
> Alst anders weesen mach, set gheen vyf schyven bloot.
> Schout ongelyck te doen, schout onghelyck t' ontfanghen,
> Laet u party niet ghaen, gaet oock gheen quade ganghen.
> Set syaen quatres goet, end'al and're doubletten,
> Cinquen syn selden quaet, doch wilter wel op letten
> Hoe dat se staen, neempt oock op systroys goede acht,

Doch al dat quaelyck staet kan werden niet gewacht.
Eer dat ghy werpt, so ziet wat goet of quaet kan vreesen,
Soo sult ghy spelen ras, end'oock met minder vreesen,
Dit heb ick eerst geleert van een syn eerlick man
Die daermede van my een kin'tge boters wan.
Saet niet in teghen't hoost, als ghy't anders kont maecken,
Ten zy ghy selvers vreest in hechtenis te raecken,
Als ghy't kent doen so set u schyven op het veer,
Is u partye sterck so komt niet licht'liek weer,
'T sou quaelyck moghen gaen, 't is hennelyck na rechten,
Dat teghen een sterck geck niet goet en is te vechten,
Als ghy speelt op syn reyds, en wilt niet haestig schryven,
End'als men met u schryft, en wilt niet haestigh blyven,
'T is schade voor de handt te schryven op de steen,
Dus doet het niet, want't is altydt twee teghen een,
En zeght hier tegen niet dat ghy seer zyt ghebeten,
'T is beter wat gheraeck dan in 't geheel ghegheten.
Swyght in een anders speel, vel seggen maeckt gheen vreught,
Kent ghy niet swyghen, zeght so weinigh als ghy mreught.
Als u party heeft aent goed' schyven wilt niet schutten,
En sonder groot verloop wilt resten nochte rutten,
'T is beter dat ghy swyght en u ghe crustigh houdt,
Dan dat ghy met onrust, schout, rest end u hooft bloudt.
Siet altemet nae't boeck, hoe 't gaen men allen saecken,
Op dat men al abuys in tydts mach rechtig maecken.
West in u speel modest, end' houd oock goed manieren,
Al ist dat ghy verliest, wilt baren nochte tieren
Noch vloecken, sweren med', maer houd u ansicht bly.
Indien ghy kunt, soo niet, het zuyrzien staet u vry.
En zeght van niemandt quaet, spreeckt wel van all absenten,
Glorieert niet in u winst men hoopt daerom ghen renten,
Indien ghy huyden wint, morghen kant anders zyn,
Daer winst is groote vreugt, daer is 't verliesen pyen.
Ontfanght ghen ghelt gheschroyt, verboden nochte licht,
'T gheen ghy bethalen moet laet zyn van goedt ghewicht.
'T verkeeren is te eel, ten lyd'gheen quade munt,
Die met goet spelen wint, is goet gelt wel gegunt.'
Adieu vrienden, adieu beminders, van't verkeeren,
Neempt dit legaet in danck, el let wel op myn leeren.

The most important of the Dutch "Académies des jeux" or manuals of games (including instruction in backgammon) of an earlier period, which we have chanced to encounter, is without date (but probably printed not far from the beginning of the nineteenth century). It is a volume of 222 pages, entitled: "Ordonnantien en gebruiken van verscheiden soorten van kaartspellen. Als het h'ombre [sic], quadrielje, piketten, modernen, klaverjassen, geerten en voltespellen. Beneffens verscheiden nieuwe kaartspellen als meede het koninglyk schaakspel, billiard, verkeer en kaatspel. Op nieuw na de hedendagsche manier en order geschikt door H. D. K. En zyn te bekoomen te Dort... Haarlem... Leiden... Delft... en verder in alle steeden by de boekverkoopers." The sum and substance of the description of backgammon in this volume is an anonymous poem, similar to that of "I. G. K.", which we have just reproduced. Its title is "Reglement en grondregels van het vortreffelyk verkeerspel." Some few technical terms are to be found in it such as *zessen* ("sixes"), *vieren* ("fours"), *blote schyven* ("blots") *band* ("double point") and its plural, *banden*. *jan* (printed as if it were a foreign word) and *aasje* (diminutive from), "little ace." The volume is nowhere mentioned by Van der Linde, but he cites another of the same class, hav-

ing 116 pages ("Geschichte," ii, 74), also undated: "Beknopt onderrigt in verschillende kaartspelen, alsmede in het dam — schak — billiard — domino — en trictracspel. Naar de beste bronnen bewerkt 's Gravenhage, by H. C. Susan, C. Hozoon." The author is said by Van der Linde to be H. C. Susan. The title reads like a new edition of the "H. D. K" book. It will be noticed that *trictracspel* takes the place of *verkeer* on the title-page. From the size of the volume the descriptions of the games must be very brief. [171]

We insert here the text of this second backgammon poem (pp. 208-214):

Liefhebbers die dit spel tot in de grond verstaan,
En die schier nimmer, of zeer zelden fout begaan,
Deez' wet is niet voor u, maar voor de nieuwelingen,
Die meesten tyd het spel door goeden goojen dwingen,
Dat schier als eigen is aan iemand die eerst leerd.
Zo gy dan leeren wild hoe dat men wel verkeerd,
Zo zalik u terstond des spels hoedanigheden,
Zo ver 't my is bekend, uit liefde gaan ontleden,
Zet eerst twee schyven af, zo gy geen zessen gooid
En wild gy dan u spel behoorlyk zien voltooid,
Zo moet gy met verstand het gantsche spel doorletten,
Dat gy de zessen en de vieren goed moet zetten,
Want 't een komt zelden goed en 't ander veeltyds kwaad,
Maakt dat gy niet te veel met blote schyven staat,
Ten zy dat u party daar niet wel by kan komen.
Zes driën dient in 't begin ook naarstig waargenomen.
Verloopt u schyven niet zo 't anders wezen kan,
Want schyven buiten 't bord brengt zelden voordeel aan,
En band niet al te vroeg, zo gy wat uit wilt rechten.
Daar moeten schyven zyn zult ge u party bevechten,
En zo gy banden maakt, zo houd ze dicht byeen;
Een ongesloote spel verliest men in 't gemeen;
Wilt niet al te onbedacht een redelyk spel wagen,
Aan de uitval van een gooi, nog zoekt het niet doorslagen,
't Komt zomtyds wel eens goed, maar dickwils weer heel kwaad.
Wanneer men al te los party zyn schyven slaat;
Dog staat het spel wat los, en kunt gy 't dan zo maken,
Dat u party daar door ten borde uit komt raken,
Zo is 't meest altyd goed. Verbrui het dan maar niet,
Gelyk men in 't gemeen wel van een leerling ziet.
Op jan te spelen doet zomwyl een spel verlopen,
Zodanig dat men 't nog moet met verlies bekopen;
Dog ziet daar nimmer op, speeld na 't beloop van 't spel;
Al valt het kwalyk uit, nochtans zo speeld gy 't wel.

[171] One reason of the paucity of early technical literature in Dutch relating to backgammon is probably the fact that so many editions of the French "Académie des jeux", the authoritative manual of social and table-games on the Continent during the whole of the XVIIIth century and later, were issued in Holland. The first Amsterdam edition was in 1756 and was followed by others in 1758, 1760, 1763, 1766, 1770, 1773, 1777, 1786 and 1789 (two separate issues). Of two of these (1756 and 1763), copies lie before us. They both contain a section relating wholly to backgammon games, and having its own table of contents (1756, pp. 413-530; 1763, seconde partie, pp. 27-135). In the latter, the "Chanson de tric trac" ("Galans, je veux vous apprendre"), precedes the text. The varieties described in both are the same, as is the matter (the language being here and there slightly altered): *trictrac*, *revertier*, *toute-table*, *les dames rabatues*, *plein* and *toc*. Of the space, by far the larger part is given to *trictrac*. There was another compilation or reprint of the Paris "Académie" having the title of "La plus nouvelle académie des jeux", of which Van der Linde cites the following issues in Holland: La Haye (the Hague), 1696; no place given by Van der Linde, 1718; Leide (Leyden), 1721; Amsterdam 1728 (merely a reissue of 1721); Amsterdam and Leipsic 1752.

Let vlytig op de kop en loopt 'er niet op binnen,
Schoon ik het zestiennmaal zodanig heb zien winnen,
Ook van een eerstling, met nog eens vyf daar by,
Die hy loo achtereen gewonnen heeft van my;
Nochtans is niet veel goeds van zulk een spel te hopen,
Dat men vrywillig of gedwongen in moet lopen.
Draag zorg ook dat gy u geen boeren jan en zet,
Want gy het myden kont indien gy 'er slechts op let.
Vyf banden moogt ge u wel gemeenlyk op vertrouwen,
Maar als gy daar dan wilt vyf lopers by gaan houwen,
Is 't meest wel een te veel, en hebt gy 't spel wat mooi:
Zyt niet hovaardig, want 't verkeerd vaak door een gooi;
Denk aan den naam van 't spel. Zyt altyd eens van zinnen,
Of gy het spel verliest, dan of gy 't komt te winnen,
Te letten op het spel en 't spelen van party,
Dat is de ziel van 't werk, a dus zo schynt het my
Vergrypt gy eens een schyf, wilt daarom niet krakeelen,
Gy moet, al waar 't tot schâ, die zelve schyf dog spelen
Gooi niet voor u party zyn zetten heeft gedaan,
Want gooid gy kwaad, gewis party hond zig daar aan,
En zal u door zoo'n sout zomtyds het spel ontleggen.
Wilt in het spelen niet als 't nodige maar zeggen.
Speeld met geen schyf te veel, nog met geen schyf te min:
Want zo u dit geviel, dat gy 'er kwam op in,
En nam u schyven uit, party die zou u krygen.
En schryven 't spel u aan, en gy zoud moeten zwygen.
Hebt gy een schyf te veel, party die neemt ze uit,
Na eigen zinlykheid, gy zyt' er meé gebruid.
Hebt gy'er een te min, party zal op u passen,
En u, als gy 't niet gist, met deeze schyf verrassen,
Het zetten op de broek, als hy zyn voordeel ziet,
En helpen zo u spel schier t'eenemaal tot niet.
Draagd zorg ook dat gy komt niet eene schyf te roeren,
Ten zy gy vooraf weet als dat gy uit kont voeren,
De waarom van de zet, met goede en vaste reên,
Of anders speeld gy zo maar in het wilde heen;
Daar moeten reden zyn, 't verkeeren steund op gronden:
Geen aasje hoe gering of 't is 'er aan gebonden.
Wanneer als u dan dunkt dat gy het spel verstaat,
Ten minsten dat het zo wat redelyk henen gaat,
Zo gaat dan over aan het spelen met gedagten,
(Of zo dat werd genoemd) schoon veelen het veragten,
En zeggen dat het niet als maar een loopje is.
Zy tasten in die zaak, dunkt my, geweldig mis,
Het is de grond van 't spel, bekwaam om door te leeren,
Den oorsprong en het pit, en 't merg van 't wel verkeeren.
Want alles wat men gooid daar 's weinig spelen aan,
Hy wyst zig zelfs, of dit, dit is 't beloop daar van
't Zyn veeltyde raadzels, of het zyn gedwonge zetten:
Maar op het andere valt meerder op te letten.
Een dans na een phiool word lichtelyk gedaan,
Maar danssen en zingen t'zaam daar is meer moeiten aan.
Die uit een vreemde taal een boek gaat overbrengen,
Schoon dat het heerlyk is, moet echter dog gehengen,
Dat men niet zeid als: het is wel getranslateerd.
Zo is 't met de geen die na de gooi verkeerd,
Daar men zig zelve dog gestadig na moet richten:
Een meester moet hier door vaak voor een leerling zwichten
Uit oorzaak van de gooi en steenen die 't hem doen
Verliezen met geweld, dat niemand kan verhoên,
Maar zonder steenen zo en ziet men zulks niet blyken;
Die 't spel 't best verstaat die gaat' er mede stryken,

Hoewel dat ik 't gebruik der steenen niet veragt,
Nog iemand zoekt te ontraên, dat heb ik nooit gedagt:
Speeld wat u best gevalt, de gronden van't verkeeren,
Moet gy dog zekerlyk door de gedagten leeren.

The two or three recent Dutch publications embracing backgammon, which have fallen into our hands, are of the most ordinary class. The first has sixteen pages, and is entitled "Reglement voor het triktrakspel.—Tweede druk.—Alkmaar. P. Kluitman," having no date, but issued evidently very recently. It is a separate reprint of the backgammon portion (pp. 76–87) of a small manual of games, "Handleiding en regels voor den kaartspeler. Whist, boston, ombre enz.—Elfde druk.—Alkmaar—P. Kluitman" (also without date). The game treated is *verkehr*, though styled *triktrak*. There is little in the meagre article to demand notice, but it gives us the modern orthography of some of the terms. We rapidly enumerate these: *koker* is "dice-box;" *dobbelsteen*, "die;" *werpen*, to "cast" or "throw;" *worp*, "cast" (noun); *oogen*, "dice-points; *aas* (plural, *azen*), "ace;" *alle azen*, *alle tweën*, *alle drieën*, "double aces," "double deuces," "double threes;" *dubbelen*, "doublets;" *schijf* (plural *schijven*), "point" on the board, but when considered with reference to the movements of the men, frequently *punt* as *vijfpunt*, *zespunt*, "five-point," "six-point;" *gedoubleerde schijven*, "double points," "covered points;" *hoek*, "coin de repos." The compiler of the brochure records a rule for the proper construction of the backgammon board, which we do not remember to have seen elsewhere. The twelve points on either side of the board must, he says, each have a length equal to two-fifths of the breadth of the surface inside the board, so that the remaining one-fifth will be the space left between the two lines of points. Another booklet of even less pretention is "Dammen domino en trictrak [*sic*] door W. van Buuren—Derde druk—Gouda G. B. van Goor zonen 1903. (pp. 63). The final pages (56-63) are devoted to "trictrac of bakspel"—the latter word being a novel appellation. *Bak* (plural, *bakken*) is "trough," "box," "basin," and is the term for either section, or half, of the backgammon-board, united by its hinges—a name describing the shape of the sections. We are told that the game is played "in een bord, dat samengesteld is uit twee bakken." This explains the literal signification of *bakspel*, although there may be in it a reminiscence of the English *back*-gammon. We are told that the game is very old "and, according to some writers, of English or Saxon origin," the author's way, doubtless, of trying to express "Anglo-saxon." Then he tells us that Swift—it is here written "Zwift"—esteemed it to be "the only game which a clergyman can properly play, not even excepting chess"—a deduction, apparently, from the asserted extract from the letter of Swift to a friend lately removed into the country, which we have elsewhere cited. Terms not already quoted from the other volume are: *binnenbak*, *buitenbak*, "home-board," "outer board;" *driehoeken*, *velden* (singular *driehoek*, *veld*), board-points, but we find here *punten* likewise; *puntje* (plural, *puntjes*), "dice-points;" *beker*, "dice-box." Next, the author furnishes a list of a dozen technical words, among them being: *doeblet* (which the preceding work calls a *dobbel*), "doublet," with examples as *twee azen*, *twee tweën* etc.; *pion*, "man;" *overbrengen*, to "carry on," or "move" the men; *talon*, the first point, on which the men are massed at the beginning of the game (borrowed from the French); *band*, "covered point;" *brug*, literally "bridge,"

the barrier formed by six contiguous double points; *slaan*, to "strike," or a "strike," a term of counting, setting a "marquer," as in the French game, in front of one of the board-points, on scoring a game-point; *afbrengen* (literally, "bring off"), to "bear;" *codille*, a borrowed card-term, equivalent to a double loss, a "backgammon." After this brief glossary, we have thirteen "rules of the game," and the text ends with a few explanatory notes: deciding the first play; moving the men in accordance with the number of dice-points; how doublets are played; the "bearing" of men and so on. It is still difficult to form any certain idea of the game here described; it seems to be either a simplified French *trictrac*, or *verkehren* with a few *trictrac* features.

In England we shall find much more material for the treatment and illustration of the nard-backgammon game than is available in any other land. Yet much more than we have been in a position to get together will, without doubt, some day see the light. The mediæval game or games of tables, however they were played, seem in England to have become common and popular outside the court and convent sooner, and to a greater extent, than elsewhere. The Latin MS—the work of an English pen—which we have reproduced (pp. 161-165), would appear to mark partly the transition period between tables and the modern games, partly the definite beginning of backgammon. One technical term cited in it certainly continued in use down to a recent period. But we have before discussed this matter of the chronological line which separates the age of tables from that of backgammon (pp. 78-79).

First of all let us consider the dice. The word *die* comes into English, like a multitude of other Latin vocables, through France, where it is to be found some two centuries before it occurs in England. On its etymology we have already dwelt (pp. 70-71). The old French was "de" (earlier "det"), the plural being "dez." The English form *dey* existed in the XIVth century, and this and *dez* were sometimes used down to the XVIIth century. The "New English Dictionary" enumerates many orthographical variants particularly of the plural. The chronicle of Robert de Brunne gives us (1330) the plural *des*, while the "Chester Plays" (1400)—unless that be due to its modern editor—has the form now in vogue: "Using cardes, dice, and cupes smalle," the *cupes* (cups) being, doubtless, the dice-boxes. The oldest Chaucer MS has *dees*, which survived, says a lexicographer, as late as 1484 in a book from Caxton's press; but in Caxton's "Playe of the Chesse" (1471) we have another form, which is treated as both singular and plural: "He caste three dyse, and on each dyse was a sise [six]," and elsewhere in the same work: "In his left hand thre dyse." These passages recall the fact, already noted, that in certain games of tables two and in others three dice were employed. This was the case in England as well as on the continent. Thomas Wright, in his "History of Domestic Manners" (1862, p. 217), cites from the French translation of Jacobus de Cessolis' work on chess the mention made of a dicer, who is represented as using three dice. The writer adds: "Two dice were, however, sometimes used especially in the game of hazard which appears to have been the great gambling game of the middle ages. Chaucer, in the 'Pardoneres tale,' describes the 'hazardours' as playing with two dice. But in the curious scene in the 'Towneley mysteries,'—a collection of thirty-four mystery-plays edited by the Surtees

society, London 1836—the scene mentioned is on p. 241—a work apparently contemporary with Chaucer, the tormentors, or executioners, are introduced throwing for Christ's unseamed garment with three dice; the winner throws fifteen points, which could only be thrown with that number of dice." The scene mentioned anticipates the similar one of Hans Sachs, from which we have quoted, by two centuries. In 1393, Chaucer's contemporary, Gower, tells us, in two of the thirty thousand lines of his "Confessio Amantis," that

> The chaunce is caste upon a dee
> But yet full oft a man may se,

and so on. In a work of 1430 the author declares "North so gret as a as [ace] in a dee." The well-known passage in "Richard III,"

> I have set my life upon a cast
> And I will stand the hazard of the die,

is thoroughly Shakespearean, reminding one, in its construction, of the "stalemate" passage familiar to most chess players; it is interesting, too, as giving a second dice-term, the noun *cast*. In another drama of the same period, "The Changeling" of Middleton and Rowley (1623), we discover this couplet:

> 'Tis a precious craft to play with a false die
> Before a cunning gamester.

Child's great collection of ballads (III. 296) has a piece, "Young Hunting," containing these lines:

> Will ye gae to the cards or dice
> Or to a tavern fine?

In more modern writings the references to dice are, of course, too numerous to cite. There is a slang expression, now rarely used, but once common: "The whole box and dice," implying "the whole lot," "the whole number of persons or things." *Dice-boxe* occurs in a vocabulary of 1552, with the Latin definitions, "fimum," "fritillum." The word has thus been, for three centuries, the ordinary name for what the French style the "cornet." Addison, in the "Guardian" (no. 120) alludes to "Thumping the table with the dice-box;" the implement is sometimes called in American slang "the shaker."

As to the dice-points or *pips*, this latter word is said by recent dictionary-makers to be a shortened form of "pippin," which signifies originally a seed of a fruit, while the former (*point*) does not seem to be given in any dictionary in the sense of *dice-pip*. The French names of the dice-points were greatly used in England until the last century, and are even now generally given, in a more or less corrupted form, in many treatises on table-games. The latest one of importance furnishes a list of the names of the points on the board (*ace, deuce, trois, quatre, cinque, six*); but the author also makes use of the same to designate the dice-points. Some confusion is caused by the fact that we English use *point* both for the "dots" on the dice and the twenty four *points* (French "flèches") on the board: 1. Ace is the French "as," which is the Latin "as," meaning an "unit," or a "one" which again is said—but recently doubted—to come from ἅς a dialect (Tarentine) form of the Greek εἷς ("one"). In early (middle) English it was

written in various ways, *as, aas,* most commonly, or *ais, ase* etc., occurring perhaps as early as the word *dice.* We find it as a pure dice term in Shakespeare's "Cymbeline:" "Your Lordship is the most patient man in losse, the most coldest that euer turn'd up ace." Other illustrations of its use follow below. 2. Deuce, as a dice-numeral, is derived from "duos," the accusative of the Latin "duo" (the second of the numerals) through the French "deux." As we have stated, it has nothing in common, etymologically or otherwise, with the other (exclamatory) word *deuce* ("deuce take you!), which is a depreciative corruption of the Latin noun "deus" ("god"). Deuce was early written *dewes* and *deus* and in other ways, but we find *deuce* in 1519, while Florio (in 1598) makes its plural *dewses.* Besides the technical use of *deuce* there are many instances of its employment, with *ace,* in its figurative sense as representing the lower or poorer classes (see pp. 242-3) among which are most of those which follow: Caxton, in his "Reynard the Foxe" (1481), speaks of "A pylgrym of deux aas," while we find that in another version of the same old allegorical story, but apparently of much later date, the idea is expressed in these two lines:

> That which is likened to deuce-ace
> Hath in estcem the lowest place.

From Shakespeare's "Love's Labor Lost" (1588) we take this: "You know how much the grosse summe of deuce-ace amounts to .... which the base vulgar call three." 3. *Trey* (*tray*) is through the old French "treis," modern "trois," from the Latin "tres." The old play "Royster Doyster," Nicholas Udall—the earliest English comedy (1566)—has: "I wyll be here with them, ere ye can say *trey ace.*" 4. *Cater* (*catter, quater*) is, of course, the French "quatre," remotely from the Latin "quatuor," and was formerly in frequent use for the four-point of the die. William Harmon, a chaplain to queen Anne Boleyn and a writer of rare learning, says in his "Vulgaria" (1519) "Cater is a very good caste." Sir Thomas Wilson, in his "Arte of Retorique" (1553), employs the word but not in a dice sense. John Kersey, the younger, in his "Dictionarium Anglo-Britannicum" (1708), explains *caterpoint* as "the number four at dice," though it doubtless meant the four-point on the board. Bailey the lexicographer, a little later (his dictionary appeared in various reprints or editions from 1721 on), defines *cater-tray* as "the four and the three, hence apparently, a cant term for dice." But long before the time of these writers of dictionaries we find *cater* in very general use. In the before-quoted "Chester Plays" (1500) this occurs:

> Here is catter-traye,
> Therfore goe thou thy waye.

"The quarrel was about cater-tray," signifying that "it was a dice-dispute," is a phrase in the tract "Pappe with a Hatchet" (1589), now usually ascribed to the dramatist and novelist, William Lyly. 5. *Cinque* (*cinq, sink, synke*), from the Latin "quinque," through the French, appears to have been common from an early day. Horman (1519), cited above, speaking of ancient dice, asserts that "Deuce and synk were not in the olde dyce." In Otway's tragedy, "The Atheist" (1684), a character exclaims: Farewel .... seven and eleven, sink-tray and the doublets!" Perhaps the oldest appearance of *cinque* is in the "Pardoner's Tale" (1386) of Chaucer, who certainly knew the dice-

points familiarly, as probably most dwellers in cities in those days did. The passage is: "Seuene is my chaunce and thyn is cynk and treye." Motteux (1708), the translator of Rabelais, speaks of "Cinques, quaters, treys and duces." 6. *Sice* (*size*, *syse*, *sis*) are from French "six" and Latin "sex." Chaucer (1386) in the "Monke's Tale" has these lines:

> Empoysend of thin ouyne folk thou were;
> Thyn sis fortune hath turned into aas.

In his version of the satires of Persius, Dryden produces the couplet:

> But then my study was to cog the dice
> And dexterously to throw the lucky sice.

The next citation,

> Thoughe sys or synke them fayle
> The dyse oft renneth upon the chaunce of thre,

is found in the translation (1509) of the German "Ship of Folys" by Sebastian Brant.

The names of the dice-doublets are in English almost wholly restricted to that given to the double ace, which has entered largely into literature and must, at one time, have been in ordinary use. To this word, *ambes-ace* (*ambs-ace*), in early English, *ambesas*, *ambesaas*, we have before more than once alluded (see especially p. 190), and have cited one of the earliest passages (1300) in which it is found in literature. Chaucer, introducing so many dice-words, did not neglect this term for double aces. In the "Canterbury Tales"—so faithful a picture of English life in his time—the "Man of Lawes tale" (1386) has:

> Youre bagges ben nat fuld with ambes aas,
> But with sys synk, that renneth on your chaunce.

But before the "Harrowing of Hell" (1300) and before Chaucer, we have, in a metrical chronicle of England (1297), reputed to be by Robert of Gloucester, and of which he pretty surely wrote a part, a phrase: "Ac he caste þer of ambes as." Another writer, who wrote very near 1300, makes a speaker say: "Thu ert icome therto to late; thu hast icast ambez as." In a middle English poem usually styled "The History of Beryn," for a time attributed to Chaucer, but written about 1400, occur these lines:

> I bare thre dise in myne own purs;
> ... I kist [cast] hem forth all three,
> And too fil [fell] amys ase.

That widely-famed voluminous writer of those old days, John Lydgate, who died about the middle of the XVth century, was fond of calling himself "Chaucer's disciple." In one of his minor poems (composed about 1430) he writes of one,

> Whos chaunce gothe neyther on sink nor sice,
> But withe ambes aas encresith his dispence.

A character in Shakspeare's "All's well ends well" (1601) cries: "I had rather be in this choise than throw ames-ace for my life." The other French word for double aces, "besas" ("beset"), which has rarely been used in

English, is defined by Cotgrave in his French-English dictionary (1611) as "*aumes*, on the dice." Cleveland (or Cleiveland), the cavalier poet, in his "Vindiciæ," a collection of verse, speaks, in a poem (1658), of some one:

> In whom Dame nature tries
> To throw less than aums ace upon two dice.

The couplet,

> Idly vent'ring her good graces
> To be disposed of by alms-aces,

is to be found in a piece of verse (1680) in the "Remains" of Samuel Butler, the author of Hudibras. Mrs. Susannah Centlivre was popular, both as an actress and a dramatic writer. In her play "The Gamester" (1705) a character exclaims:

> My evil genius flings am's ace before me!

It is a little singular that William Wollaston's "Religion of Nature" (1722), a book greatly read in its day, should contain the following bit of figurative language: "Nobody can certainly foretell, that sice-ace will come up on two dies [sic], fairly thrown, before ambs-ace." Sherwood's English-French dictionary (1650), which was the second part of Cotgrave's work, renders "to cast ambes-ace" by "faire ambezatz" — a noticeable orthography of the French form (now written "ambesas"). The philosopher, Thomas Hobbes, in those "Questions of Liberty, Necessity and Chance" (1656), which he discussed with his acrimonious critic, Archbishop Bramhall, introduces the dice-term: "This will be yet clearer by considering his own instance of casting ambs-ace, though it partake more of contingency than of freedom." Fielding, in one of his less-known plays, called, we believe, "The Lottery," introduces the term: "If I can but nick this time, ame's ace I defy thee." The expression, after falling into disuse, has been revived in our own day by one of the most distinguished of American essayists, James Russell Lowell, who in his "Among my Books" (1870), characterizes something as "A lucky throw of words which may come up as the sices of hardy metaphor or the ambs-ace of conceit." Here we have two words unknown except to the technical writer.[172] Besides this special word for the two aces we have noted no others which have been introduced into English, either in dice-games or table-games, nor do any seem to be known to the lexicographers. The Italian *duini* is interpreted into English by Florio's dictionary (1598) as "two deyses."

The varieties of backgammon, which are or have been played in England, are numerous. The first edition of "The Compleat Gamester" (1674), which was anonymous, treats various kinds of what it styles "Games within the tables," that is, inside the table-board, meaning the folding chess and backgammon boards. That they are named "tables" is probably on account of their double character, being composed of two pieces, although there may

[172] Lowell was very fond of old words of a quaint character. The writer remembers very well his account of his search for a word, of the existence of which he had no doubt, although he could discover no instance of its use. His delight was great, therefore, one day in spring, when riding beside the "stage-driver," in a rather remote region of Massachusetts, between fruit-trees laden with flowers, to hear the latter say: "A fine *blowth*, sir, this year!" Lowell had found his word.

be a faint echo in the term of the early times when people played "tables," and so called it. The list of games, to each of which a section is given, is: *Irish*, *backgammon*, *ticktack*, *dubblets*, *sice-ace*, and *ketch-dolt*. Another and shorter list (1700), which we have mentioned (p. 79), spoke only of *backgammon*, *tick-tack* and *Irish* (unless two others, "oaks" and "basset," were backgammon games, which they pretty surely were not). The derivation of the general name of the game, as we now regard it, *backgammon*, cannot be altogether definitely decided. It is said by the best lexicologists to be a compound of *back* and *gammon*. The former element had its present signification; the latter is our word *game*, which, in middle English, was variously written *gamen*, *gomen*, *gammen*, *gammon*. It became our modern English *game* because the *-en*, (*-n*) came to be erroneously regarded as an inflectional suffix, like *-en* in "oxen" and "brethren," and was accordingly dropped as the development into the newer English went on. It is an indication of the age of the term that the compound, *backgammon*, was probably formed before *gamen* became *game*, and the second element, for this reason, underwent no change. As to the literal meaning of the compound, and especially of its first element, *back*, in this connection, the general opinion (or shall we say surmise?) of the lexicographers is expressed by the "Century Dictionary" (sub voce). It states that the game is "apparently so-called because, in certain circumstances, the pieces are obliged to go back and re-enter. The reason of the name is not certain, but the formation is clear." There is another surmise that may be made, and which is at least equally probable. Let us suppose that in the varieties of the very earliest mediæval tables, each player was confined to his own table, advancing his men *forward* through the twelve points, and that then the game ended by his having brought his men to the last point, or when he had thrown them off from his own second board (that is from his last six points). There are indications that this was the case with at least one method of playing tables. Now supposing that in one variety (which may have existed before, but from its supposed superior difficulty had not been common) — one new variety, let us say — the course of each player's men was continued. They crossed over into the opponent's second board (second six points), and, reversing their course, were played or moved *back* to the other end of the board, whence they had come. This variety, from the peculiar feature which we have mentioned, got to be known as *backgammon*, the *game* in which the men went *back* to the portion of the board whence they started. Becoming popular — the most played of all the games "within the tables" — it led to the abandonment of the venerable name "tables" so far as England was concerned, and the adoption of the generic appellation *backgammon* for all games "within the tables." It must be remembered that this was the course of events only in England, in which the *backgammon* proper has always been looked upon as the typical "tables" game. In other countries, the ancient "ludus tabularum," perhaps for similar reasons, assumed other names. We have a strictly modern form of the ward *backgammon* in the technical term *back-game*, which is explained in the "Compleat Gamester" to be like the French "jan de retour," which has nothing to do with "re-entering" the men, but is really a first step, by going over to the enemy's side, towards playing the men back to the other end of the board. But the whole of this explanation is, we confess, not wholly convincing, and certainly that of the

dictionaries is assuredly of no greater force. We cannot imagine that anybody would call the re-entering of the captured men a back-*game* at any stage of the game's history. The word *game* is not descriptive of the operation. The name of the game is often mentioned in English literature after the XVIth century. It occurs in Howell's "Letters" (1645), as we shall see hereafter. Thomas D'Urfey in his play, "Madame Fickle" (1676), speaks of it as if it were a well-known game: "I won 300 guineys of him t'other night at backgammon." In Butler's "Hudibras" (1678) the author says:

> The hangman
> Was like to lurch you at back-gammon,

in which lines we have likewise the very ancient and widespread backgammon term, *lurch*. In "Humphrey Clinker" (1771) we find that Smollett alludes to the game in the phrase: "And play at billards, cards or backgammon." In Lockhart's life of Scott (under date of 1814) the great romancer tells us that "In the evening backgammon and cards are in great request." In "Don Juan" (V. x.), Byron (1820) has the following comparison:

> Like a backgammon board the place was dotted
> With whites and blacks.

Mrs. Piozzi, the friend of Dr. Johnson, in her "Journey through France" tells of "A backgammon table preserved behind the high altar" of some church she visited. We have not been able to discover any instance of the use of *backgammon* in the XVIth century, although it is very likely that the word may have begun to be employed in the latter part of that period (see pp. 79-80). Prefixed to the earliest "Compleat Gamester" (1674) is an elaborate copperplate frontispiece picturing, in its different divisions, the playing of six different classes of games treated in the volume. Opposite is a rhymed "Explanation of the frontispiece," with allusions to each panel and the game depicted thereon. The lines relating to backgammon run as follows:

> Now t'Irish or back-gammoners we come,
> Who wish their money, with their men, safe home,
> But as in war, so in this subtle play,
> The stragling men are ta'ne up by the way,
> By entring then, one reinforceth more,
> It may be to be lost, as those before.
> By topping, knapping and foul play some win;
> But those are losers, who so gain by sin.

"Topping" is thus explained by the "Century Dictionary:" "A method of cheating at dice in vogue about the beginning of the eighteenth century. Both dice seemed to be put into the box, but in reality one was kept at the top of the box between the fingers of the person playing." In connection with this explication it is natural to ask what became of the "fingered" die? Of course, the two dice must fall on the table, or the cast would be void. Did the holder drop it on the table, by some prestidigitation, on the side he wished it to lie? The explanation has its difficulties. By the same authority *napping* ("to nap") signifies "cheating," the work citing a passage: "Assisting the frail square die with high and low fullums, and other napping tricks" from the works (1707-8) of Tom Brown, the satirist. But what are "fullums?" Of the origin of the name of the variety called *Irish*,

nothing, so far as we have ascertained, is known. Like "Russian" backgammon in America it perhaps received the name because it was unlike the game with which everybody was familiar. Hence it was supposed to come from another country. It was unlike the English game, and as nobody knew whence it came it might as well be baptized *Irish* as anything else. It is styled by Hyde (1694) "tictac seu trictrac Hibernorum," which seems to imply that it came from, or was much played by the Irish, but he gives no definite or further explanation. It was evidently much played in the XVIIth and XVIIIth centuries. In a volume entitled "Tarlton's Newes out of Purgatorie" (1590), ascribed to Richard Tarlton or Tarleton, a famous comic actor, although he is now believed not to have been its author, occurs an allusion to Irish: "Her husband that loved Irish well, thoughte it no ill trick to beare a man too many" — punning on the backgammon phrase, "to bear a man." The comparison, "Like an after-game at Irish, that is wonne and lost divers times in an instant," is found in the "Essayes" (1601) of that good knight, Sir William Cornwallis. A little later in date is Beaumont and Fletcher's "Honest Man's Fortune," in which the advice is given to a would-be man of the world to

> Keep a four-nobles nag and a Jack-merlin,
> Learn to love ale, and play at two-hand Irish,

the merlin being a falcon. In the "Letters" (1645) of James Howell, the editor of Cotgrave's "French and English Dictionary," which we have mentioned more than once, there is a passage which refers not only to *Irish*, but to an early form of the word *backgammon:* "Though you have learnt to play at *baggammon*, you must not forget Irish which is a more serious and solid game." Another knight, and a comedy-writer, Sir George Etherege, in his "Love in a tub" (1664) says: "Here's a turn with all my heart like an *after-game* at Irish." Addison, in "Cato," uses *after-game*, and in doing so is perhaps thinking of Irish. Until after the middle of the XVIIth century *Irish* was still to be found in the "Compleat Gamester," but has long been discarded from books on games. The next game in the "Gamester" list is *tick-tack*. On the supposed origin of this name, we have already touched (pp. 185-7). It would seem that the form was used in England rather than *trick-track* (the French spelling, *tric-trac* being, of late times, more common than either). *Trick-track*, of course, came from France, and it is possible that *tick-tack* may have reached England from Holland. Hyde (1694) pretty plainly says that *tric-trac* is used in France and *tictac* in England. The dictionaries do not help us to judge which is the earlier. *Tick-tack* is used by Shakespeare (in "Measure for Measure," first acted in 1604): "a game of ticke-tacke;" by Milton, who speaks of "A game at tick-tack with words;" and earlier than either by Ben Jonson in "Every Man in his Humour," first produced in 1598, this being the oldest citation yet found: "He'll playe at fayles and tick-tack," which we have quoted more fully in an earlier place (p. 88), also explaining "fayles." The reader will perhaps recall the absurd etymology quoted from the "Complete Gamester" (p. 159, *note*). This is cited, apparently in all seriousness by the "Century Dictionary;" it even calls special attention to it. The definition given of *tick-tack* by the dictionary is incorrect: "A complicated kind of backgammon, played both with men and with pegs;" what is here referred to is the "Grand trictrac," which we have

described; it is not played with pegs at all — the pegs are employed merely to mark the game or the game-points. The "Century" gets this bit of wisdom from "Webster's Dictionary" (1882), without any effort at further research, and repeats it under the word *trick-track*, which Webster does not. The game following in our list is *doublets*. Cotgrave makes the French name "renette," concerning which word the French lexicographers do not give us much light. Then comes his definition: "a game at tables of some resemblance with our doublets or queenes game." As regards the latter name Hyde (ii. 37) quotes a passage, explaining its significance from one of the learned *opusculi* of Salmasius (Claude Saumaise), the author of the "Defensio regia pro Carlo I," and the intensely hostile critic of Milton — "the diabolical rebel Milton" the translator of the work cited makes him call the great poet — the passage explaining that "renette" is a corruption of "reginula" or rather "regineta," a diminutive of "regina:" "Præter tric-tracum quem vocamus, alium etiam ludum cum tesseris & calculis in tabula lusitare consuevimus: reginulam vulgò vel reginetam vocamus, quasi parvam reginam; nam quidam calculus nuncupatur. Ingeniosus hic ludus, & multum habet artis, & super duodecim tantùm tabulæ punctis luditur. Vincit autem qui omnùm tabulæ punctis luditur." Hence the game is called the "queen's game." From the peculiar value of doublets in the game (double fours, for instance, as we shall see, enabling him who has that cast to move eight men) comes the other name of this variety. It is heard of in literature in the XVIth and XVIIth century. Bishop Latimer, the reformer and martyr, in his fourth sermon before Edward VI (1549), says: "They be at their doublets still." In one of his plays (1651), the poet William Cartwright puts into the mouth of a character:

> What! where's your cloak? . . .
> To tell you truth, he hath lost it at doublets.

Still another bishop, John Earle, in his "Microcosmographie" (1628), which went through many editions before 1786, says: "At tables he reaches not beyond doublets," though this may refer rather to the dice than to the game of doublets. There is the same doubt about the passage from Osway's "Atheist," cited on a previous page. The name of the next "Gamester" game, *sice-ace*, can hardly be found outside of the manuals of games. It is so called because of the prominent part played by the dice-points, ace and six. It is slight in character and may be played by five persons. It will be described with other English games later. The final game in the "Gamester" list bears the name of *ketch-dolt*; from the game's character there is little doubt that the word is properly *catch-dolt*,—indeed it is printed so in later issues — which explains its own derivation. The only other issue of the "Compleat Gamester" now before us is the eighth (London 1754), eighty years after the first. In those eighty years two other games were added to the list of those "within the tables." They are "The famous game of verquere" and "The noble and courtly game called the grand trick track," as they are denominated in the head-lines of the sections describing them. This makes the number of backgammon varieties eight. It is perhaps reasonable to suppose that between the two dates the two games added (and which are given a position before the others) had either been newly introduced into England, or had recently become prominent; or either or both may have been translated from

Marinière, or the "Académie des jeux," after the manner of the compilers of hand-books of games in our day.[173] Of *verquere* we are told, in this final edition of the "Gamester," that it "is said to be originally of Dutch extraction, and one of the most noted diversions among the Hollanders," a statement

[173] None of the bibliographies give us much information in regard to these volumes bearing the title of "Gamester," which were without doubt suggested by Marinière's "Maison académique." One bibliographer (for instance, Allibone) simply copies the exceedingly meagre notices of another (for instance, Lowndes). Continental book-lists, as is too often the case, afford us somewhat better accounts of English publications than are to be had from the lists issued in England. Though in this case even the former are deficient. Starting with this eighth edition of the "Compleat Gamester" (1754) — it will be remembered that the first (1674) was anonymous — we find it stated on the title-page that the book was "First written for the use of the young princesses, by Richard Seymour, Esq; And now carefully revised, very much enlarged and improved, agreeable to the present method of playing the several games, by Charles Johnson, Esq." The title proper is "The compleat gamester: in three parts. Containing, I. The court gamester: or, full and easy instructions for playing the games of whist, ombre, quadrille, quintille, picquet, and the royal game of chess [this last occupying pp. 122-136]. II. The city gamester: or, true manner of playing the most usual games at cards viz. all-fours, cribbidge [sic], put, lue [sic], brag, lottery, &c. With several diverting tricks upon the cards; also rules for playing at all the games both within and without the tables; and at English and French billiards.... III. The gentleman's diversion: or, the arts of riding, racing, cocking, and bowling." The preface is signed by Richard Seymour, and its final paragraph (p. vii) reads thus: "The second and third parts of this treatise, were originally written by Charles Cotton, esq; some years since, but are now rectified according to the present standard of play." This preface may have been prepared for some previous edition, and some of its statements may not be applicable to this. It is to be incidently noticed that neither draughts nor morris, nor fox-and-geese has been noticed in the issues of the "Compleat gamester." We have then three writers mentioned in connection with this manual of games, and we shall look at them in due order. The original edition (1674) was anonymous, but has been always ascribed to Charles Cotton (1690-1677), a humorous poet and a translator of poetical works, but who is best known as the author of the second part (trout and grayling) of that work of wide fame, the "Compleat Angler" (1653), by Izak Walton, who is said to have been the adopted father of Cotton. This second part was published separately in 1676, but was also attached to the fifth edition of the "Angler," issued in that year; since then the book has been known as "Walton and Cotton's Complete Angler." It is not unlikely that the title "The Compleat Angler" suggested to Cotton that of "The Compleat Gamester." The second name is that of Richard Seymour. He is only mentioned in connection with the "Gamester," and Lowndes puts the edition of 1734 under his name. It may be that he was the first reviser of the "Gamester" and that the preface dates from that year, but we shall hear a little more about him. The third name is that of Charles Johnson, and here we are met by the obstacle that the bibliographies speak of two of the name — contemporaries. The first wrote, as we are told, nineteen comedies, and lived from 1679 to 1748. The other compiled a general history of "the most notorious pyrates from their first rise in the Island of Providence in 1717 to 1724," which appeared at London in the latter year. This was followed by a "History of the lives and action of the most famous highwaymen, murderers, street robbers, &c., with the voyages and plunders of the most noted pirates." This was published in folio in 1734, with many remarkable illustrations, which have made it a sought-for book. There is no record of the years of his life and death, nor any note of any work by him after 1734. Despite the bibliographers these two may be one. Now Van der Linde ("Geschichte", ii., 60) reproduces the title apparently in full, of the sixth edition (1739) of the "Gamester", and likewise of the eighth (1754) (the one we have had before us). In the title-page of the former, there is no mention of Charles Johnson, although the title-page is in many respects identical with that of 1754 ("The compleat gamester: in three parts." &c.). Van der Linde records the seventh edition, but having never seen a copy, he does not give the full title, nor the date. In his "Jahrtausend der Schachlitteratur" he has ascertained that the seventh edition was printed in 1739. That then, as is likely, was the edition which Charles Johnson first edited, nine years before the death of the poet Charles Johnson. In his "Jahrtausend," which gives only very brief titles, Van der Linde makes the following presentment of the compilations bearing the title of "Gamester." First, under (Cotton), "Compleat Gamester", London 1674, second

we have previously cited (p. 188). As we have suggested, the Dutch *verkeer* may have come from the German *verkehren*, or vice-versa, but the former is possibly the more likely case. The word got into French as *reverquier*, but was superseded by *revertier*. The variety, so far as we know, has never had a genuinely English name. The other additional game, the "Grand trick track," is the French "tric-trac," which, from its elaborate method of play, has obtained its epithet of "grand." We have already stated that the only one of the numerous "jans" explained in the account of the French game is the "jan de retour" which is here spoken of as the "gens des [sic] retour or the back-game" — indicating perhaps that the editor got his knowledge of "tric trac" orally, and not from any French manual. The name of *verquere* never made its way into general literature, much less into the dictionaries; nor has the French name, *revertier*, been used in English as it has been in German. We find "Grand trictrac" cited once outside of the manuals, although *trictrac* is more frequent. The London Camden Society in 1857 published the old "Journal of the very Rev. Rowland Davies," dean of Ross, kept in 1688-90; in it the writer says: "I taught them to play grand tric trac," which proves that the name and the game were known in Great Britain more than a generation before it could have been treated in the "Gamester." "There's Mrs. Delacour leading Miss Portman off into the tric trac cabinet," writes Maria Edgeworth in her novel of "Belinda" (1901). In Julia Pardoe's "Beauties of the Bosphorus" (1839), the author mentions the game among other customary diversions in Turkey: "The amusements consist principally of.... matches at tric-trac." Hyde, in connection with the passage cited from Salmasius in regard to *doublets* ("renette"), adds a phrase showing that the "grand trictrac" was already in his day so called in France: "Idem sit hodie in eo trictraci genere quem *magnum* vulgò vocant." This refers to the first half of the XVIIth century. In regard to other names of varieties, we have spoken of "Russian backgammon," a favorite game in America, and likewise described in handbooks printed in England, but there seems to be, as has been hinted, no trustworthy information obtainable as to the *provenance* of the cognomen bestowed upon it.

edition 1676, followed by others dated 1680, 1709, 1721, 1725, and one, styled apparently. "Games," without date. Second, under (Seymour), "Court Gamester," first edition, London 1720, and then 1721, 1722, 1728, 1734, 1739, to the eighth (as he numbers them) 1754. It is difficult to reconcile these two lists. As nearly as can be deduced from the fuller titles found in the "Geschichte des Schachspiels," the "Compleat Gamester" of Cotton went through these editions: 1674, [1676?], 1680 (seemingly styled on the title-page the second edition) 1709, 1721, 1725 (on the title page the fifth edition); but in 1721 had appeared the "Court Gamester" ("written for the use of the young princesses" according to the title-page), apparently anonymous, but ascribed by the bibliographers to Richard Seymour, the second, third and fourth editions following in 1721, 1722, 1728. There is here no trace of a 1721 edition of the original compilation by Cotton. After this time it must have been decided to merge the new "Court Gamester" into the old "Compleat Gamester", which resulted in the sixth edition of the latter (1734) with Seymour's name on the title-page, and his acknowledgement of Cotton's work in the preface, as in the eighth (1754) edition. Seymour may have died before the next issue, and then Johnson may have edited it (1739), but that can only be settled by a sight of the complete title. The 1754 edition is the final appearence of the "Gamester." The more modern handbook of Hoyle superseded it. But there was another book of the "Gamester" kind, which never got beyond the first issue: "Annals of gaming; or the fair player's sure guide, containing original treatises on whist, hazard, tennis, lansquenet, picquet, billiards, loo, quadrille, lottery, backgammon &c. By a Connoisseur. London 1775," which may or may not be of value as regards backgammon

We have suggested that the German *lurtsch* or *lurtschspiel* may have had its origin in the English lurch, but the latter, so far as we know, has been little used except as a technical term ("to lurch") at backgammon.

In treating of such terms, we should first recall the fact once more that *lurch* is one of the oldest we have, it occurring even in the ancient tables, as we have recorded. The word seems to be in a very confused etymological condition. Hyde (ii. 36) tells us that in France there is a mode of play ("lusum") known as "ourche," in which, by a certain rule, the loser suffers a double penalty and the winner wins a double stake. This feature is well known, he tells us, in Belgium and in Italy, in which latter country it is called "marcio," whence the word has gone into the "lingua franca" of the east, where it is "mârç" (which he also gives in Arabic letters). It is styled "jan" by the Danes, and among the French of to-day it is "bredouille," and this mode of winning is denominated a "partie bredouille." He then speaks of the use of "l'ourche" (that is "the ourche") in English, and states that it is employed outside of the game of backgammon, quoting the expressions: "he is left in the lurch," "to lurch anything." Much of all this must be cautiously taken. The "Century Dictionary" thinks that the *l-* belongs to the word, which should thus be written in French "lourche" and is probably connected with the old French "lourche," meaning "insnared," "deceived," "duped." Its first definition of the English noun (probably inexact) is then "an old game, the nature of which is unknown," and it cites from Sir Thomas Urquhart's translation (1653) of Rabelais the sentence: "My mind was only running upon the lurch and tric-trac;" and another from the prolific dramatist Thomas Dekker's play, "The Bellman of London" (1608): "Whose inn is a bowling-alley, whose books are bowls, and whose law-cases are lurches and rubbers." The second definition is that of a technical term at cribbage (more common, if common at all, it would seem in England than in America), the third is "a cheat," "a swindle," and then the phrase "left in the lurch" is cited. Then a verb "to lurch" is explained as "to win a double game at cribbage, picquet, etc.," and as "to leave in the lurch, disappoint." This has the same origin (old French "lourche"), but the lexicographer thinks that it has been, to some extent, confused with a pure English verb "to lurch," being another form of "to lurk," and signifying variously "to lie in concealment," "to shift or dodge," "to walk unsteadily or stagger," and so on. No clear use of *lurch* as a backgammon term is given, but it is quite certain that the German "lurtsch," if not from the English, has the same origin as the English term. A very old word in backgammon is the verb, *to bear*. It signifies to move or throw off the men from the board, after they have been all advanced to the fourth, or final quarter. To *throw off* is now often used instead of it. But it has entered into literature. In the "Epigrams and proverbs" (1562) of the witty and popular writer, John Heywood, we find the following:

> I will no more play at tables with thee:
> When wee come to bearying, thou begylest mee,
> In bearying of thy men,

and later in the same work he says: "Eache other caste thou bearest a man to [too] many." An early (1748) edition of Hoyle's "Games," as cited in an article in the "Penny Cyclopædia" (iii. 240), gives this backgammon rule: "If you bear any number of men, before you have entered a man

taken up.... such men, so borne, must be entered again in your adversary's tables." The "Compleat Gamester" (1674) says under *backgammon*. "When you come to bearing have a care of making when you need not," and "If both bear together, he that is first off without doublets wins one." In the newest English "Handbook of Games" (1890) we read: "as soon as either player has brought all his men into his home table, he must begin to take them off the board, which, in the technical language of the game, is called *bearing* his men.... If it is impossible to play up a man, the man must be *borne*." This term *bear* must not be confused with *carry*, which has also been long in use and means "to advance" (or "move forward") the men. The "Handbook" describes it thus: "The game consists in moving the men from point to point, according to the figures on the dice thrown, out of the adversary's home table into his outer table, across into the player's outer table, and then over the bar into the player's home table. This process is called *carrying a man or men.*" A *blot* is a single man on a point, and therefore exposed to capture. The origin of this term is doubtful; some of the lexicologists suggest the Danish *blot*, Swedish *blott*, but the history of the game will hardly support this. Another guess has been the Dutch *bloot*, "bare," "naked," "exposed." It is not easy to see why it should not be our ordinary word "blot," in the sense of "spot," "mark," "speck," since a single man, before it is doubled, is a weak "spot" in the game or a "mark" for the adversary. In the Italian dictionary of Florio (1598) he renders the word "caccia," literally "hunt" or "chase," but used technically in backgammon, by "a blot at tables." Henry Porter the dramatist, in his only now extant play, "The pleasant historie of the two angry women of Abington" (1599), makes one of the characters say to another: "Look you mistress, now I hit you." The other responds:

> You never use to misse a blot,
> Especially when it stands so faire to hit...
> I hot your man.

A more noted writer, William Wycherley, in his comedy, "Love in a wood" (1672) makes a character exclaim: "Tho I made a blot, your oversight has lost the game." With *blot* is associated the verb, *hit*. *To hit a blot* is to capture a man standing singly on a point; from being a backgammon term it has become a very common figurative phrase. We have just cited an instance of its use as far back as 1579, but it is probably earlier, and is still used in all the manuals. The figurative use is likewise early. Thomas Hale, in his "Account of several new Inventions" (1691), says: "And he there hits a blot in the papal tenets that was never hit before." Dryden, in the dedication to the Æneid (1698), writes: "He is too great a master of his art, to make a blot which may so easily be hit." The following lines,

> Its faults... have taught him the wit,
> The blots of his neighbours the better to hit,

occur in a political ballad of 1734. Cowper employs the figure in his poem "Hope" (1781):

> The very butt of slander, and the blot
> For every dart that malice ever shot.

In our own day it occurs constantly in such sentences as: "Here the critic has undoubtedly hit a blot." But the noun *hit*, as a backgammon term, bears generally quite another meaning—so different that it is difficult to

perceive any connection between the two. One might perhaps say that when a *blot* has been *hit*, the player has made a *hit*, but we have never heard or read that expression. A *hit*, in backgammon parlance, is the simplest or mildest form of victory—the winner having *borne* or thrown off all his men, while his adversary remains with some of his still in the bearing board. In the "Compleat Gamester" (1754) this advice is given: "If your design be to get only a hit, your taking up only one or two of your adversary's men, will secure it better than if you took up a greater number;" and in the recent "Handbook of Games" (1890) this is the definition of the word: "The player who bears all his men first wins a hit or single game, provided his opponent has borne off one or more of his men." It is doubtless the result of a misunderstanding that *hit* is sometimes used in literature in the sense of game or "partie." Goldsmith in the "Vicar of Wakefield" (1766) commits this error in speaking of backgammon, "at which my old friend and I sometimes took a two penny *hit*"—a meaningless expression. In the novel by Lever, "The Martins of Cro' Martin" (1856), is found the passage: "A hardly contested 'hit' of backgammon was being fought out," regarding which the author might claim that the players were playing for a *hit*—a mere simple win—but whether it were to be a *hit*, in this proper sense, could hardly be decided while the battle was still "hardly contested;" so we fear that Lever is in the same category as Goldsmith. The 1890 "Handbook" explains in connection with the two *hits*, other technical words: "But if a player has borne all his men before his opponent has borne any, that player wins a *gammon*, equivalent to two games or hits. If the loser still have one or more men in his adversary's home table, or waiting to enter, when the winner has borne all his men, the latter is considered to have won a *backgammon*, provided that the loser has not previously borne a man." These two terms are likewise in use as verbs; *to gammon* one's adversary is to win a gammon, and to *backgammon* him is to win a backgammon. That long-continued and useful serial, the "Annual Register," for 1793 (p. 246), uses this phrase: "At length he by death is back-gammoned." The verb *gammon* is not lacking in general literature, having been used in 1735 by the unfortunate Richard Savage:

> At tables now?
> But oh, if gammon'd there
> The startling echoes learn like him to swear,

but still earlier (1694) by Laurence Echard in one of the plays of Plautus translated by him: "Ne'r a gamester of 'm all has half the cunning. Faith, 't was an excellent cast; 't has quite gammon'd the rascal." In a novelette in Dickens's "Good Words" (1867) we read: "'More fool you,' remarked his father, without looking up from the backgammon-board. 'There, madam, you are gammoned.'" The noun *backgammon*, in its technical sense, is found in the earliest "Compleat Gamester" (1674); both *gammon* and *backgammon* are in use in the last edition (1754); and the proper definition of *gammon* is given in the dictionary of Dycke and Pardon (1735). Formerly *gammon* was occasionally used for *backgammon*, the name of the game, but has long been rare in that sense; it was perhaps never more than a merely conversational expression. The poet Thomson, in his "Autumn" (1730), inserts these lines:

> Or the quick dice,
> In thunder leaping from the box awake
> The sounding gammon,

an odd bit of writing, to say the least. In the lives of several of the North family by Roger North (1734), the writer says of one, whom he is describing: "Whatever games were stirring, at places where he retired, as gammon, gleek, picquet, or even the merry main, he made one." In 1800, in "The Mourtray Family," a novel by Mrs. Hervey of Aiton, the reader learns that "Mr. Chowles was above, playing at *gammon* with mistress." The "Noctes Ambrosianæ" of "Christopher North" (1826), furnishes this: "The tailor at Jarrow ford dang ye all to bits baith at gammon and the dambord"—the final word being the Scotch for draughts. "It may be inferred that he too was a gammon-player," says an article in the "Monthly Magazine" (1814). On the other hand a line in the "Gentleman's Magazine" (1800) affords a legitimate use of the word: "And by quick taking off, a *gammon* win." The term *back-game* is used in the "Grand trictrac" as the equivalent of the French "jan de retour." In the English game it signifies, according to the "Handbook:" "exposing of blots unnecessarily, and otherwise waiting for the opponent to make blots, with the view of prolonging the contest in the hope of being able to outplay the adversary." Nor should this be confused with *aftergame*, a term used in connection with "Irish," the definition of which, sufficiently vague, is given by the "Century Dictionary:" "A second game played in order to reverse or improve the issue of the first; hence, the methods taken after the first turn of affairs," the last phrase describing, as it seems, its figurative sense. The definition is credited to the "New English Dictionary." Can it be of the nature of the "reprise" ("tenir") in the French trictrac (see p. 181)? Probably not. It appears not now to be employed in English backgammon, but was familiar in the XVIIIth century, when the ancient name tables, for the backgammon game, still lingered (see p. 79 for two examples). The definition of the "New English Dictionary," "a game at backgammon," is not quite correct, as whatever the term may mean, it is really only a part of a game. In chess, back-game signifies "a variation," or "a previous mode of play." The *bar* is the division or ridge between the two halves of the backgammon board—separating the two home-tables from the two outer tables. The word, in this technical sense, is so far as we know, explained by no lexicologist. Nor are we told anywhere, except in the special manuals, the meaning of *bar-point*, an important term, which denotes the seventh point of each player counting from the first point in his home-table; in other words it is the first point (next the bar) in each player's outer table; "when you have gained your cinque point your next care must be, to secure your barr point," "when you have secur'd your cinque and barr points," are phrases in the "Gamester" (1754); "when your cinque and bar points are secure," "secures his bar point" are similar ones from the latest authoritative manual. But bar has another meaning connected, however, with the dice, not the game. The word in this sense is omitted from the vocabulary of the "Century," but found in the "New English Dictionary," in which it is explained as "A kind of false die, on which certain numbers are prevented from turning up." It is explained or alluded to by that noted scholar, Roger Ascham in his "Toxophile" (1545), when he mentions "Certayne termes.... appropriate to their playing; whereby they wyle drawe a mannes money but paye none, which they cal barres;" and occurs in the old romance, from the same century, "Nobody and somebody; with the true chronicall history of Elydure" (1592),

which talks of "those demi-bars .... those bar sizeaces." In a supplement (1753) to the "Cyclopædia" of Ephraim Chambers (the first English work of its kind), we learn of "*barr* dice, a species of false dice, so formed that they will not easily lie on certain sides." There is likewise a verb *bar* with a different meaning but used of dice, "to bar the dice," explained as "to declare the throw void." It is this verb which Dryden makes use of in his little-read tragedy of "Amboyna" (1673): "He would have whip'd it up, as his own fees.... but that his lord bar'd the dice, and reckoned it to him as a part of his board wages." But there is an adjective, derived from our previous *bar* (= false die), namely, *barred*, perhaps more often written *bard*. This is found in a singular work, printed anonymously and without date at London, entitled: "A manifest detection of the most vyle and detestable use of dice-play," ascribed to Gilbert Walker (although the "New English Dictionary" does not mention his name); the date of the production is variously given as 1532 and 1552. The writer says: "Lo here.... a well favoured die, that seemeth good and square, yet is the forehead longer on the cater & tray than any other way. Such be also called *bard* cater tres, because, commonly, the longer end will, of his own sway, draw downwards, and turn up to the eye sice, sinke, deuis or ace." Dekker, from whose play, "The Bellman of London" (1608), we have already quoted, speaks in it of "A bale of bard cater-treas," while in another of his comedies, "The honest whore" (1604), he makes one of his characters say: "She suffred your tongue, like a bard catertra, to runne all this while." A few other technical words connected with the game will be noticed in examining the English methods of play.

The two games now, so far as can be ascertained, almost exclusively played in both England and America are that called simply backgammon, and that styled "Russian" backgammon. The former is the "toutes-tables" of aforetime in France, of late very much less played (p. 183) in that land, and the game now called "gammon" in Germany (and now likewise growing more common in France, according to the cyclopedia of Larousse, which would indicate the revival of "toutes-tables," but under a foreign name). It is one of the oldest forms of this table-game, going back, without much doubt, to the "todas tablas" of king Alfonso's treatise, and thus probably representing, as notably as any other method of play, the "tables" of the middle ages. Its typical characteristic is the method of "setting" the men before opening the game (see fig. 21). Their arrangement on the board is a most ingenious one, although it does not seem a difficult one to devise. But, taking into consideration the march of the men, the relations of the pieces of one player to those of the other as they advance, the making and hitting of blots, the formation of series of double points to block the adversary's movements, the mode of re-entering the men which are hit and the rules for the final "bearing" or throwing off the men—considering all these features, the practitioner, as soon as he has well grasped their significance, will concede the cleverness of the initial distribution of the pieces. It is no wonder that the "todas tablas" has a recorded history of more than six centuries. This is the variety of backgammon which has principally entered into English literature, having been the favorite diversion of men and women of culture among the English-speaking peoples for many generations—particularly among those classes, like the rural clergy and gentry and the more intelligent and leisured of the professional and com-

mercial orders, who dread the fascinations of cards and have neither time nor taste for the more severe intellectual labor demanded by chess. It has been especially the relaxation of declining years.[174] One reason of this wide-spread fondness lies, perhaps, in the fact that no other game combines so happily the elements of skill and chance. The dice are full of surprises not to be calculated before-hand, and the throws are frequently fatal to the player who eagerly watches their fall, but in the long run the best player wins. It should be remarked that the earliest names of this variety ("todas tablas," " toutes tables ") apparently signify that the men are moved through all the (four) tables or divisions, there having been other varieties in which each player's operations were confined to his own side of the board. The men having been properly placed (fig. 21) each player begins to move his men from point to point, according to the figures on the dice cast, out of his opponent's home table into the opponent's outer table, across into his own outer table, and then over the bar into the player's home table. On the way, each player, finding that his opponent has on some point only a single man, may, if the numbers on the dice permit, remove that man from the board, occupying the point by one (or more) of his own men. The opponent, before advancing any of his men, must re-enter the man, thus removed or taken up, in his adversary's home table. If the points in that table indicated by the dice are covered (that is have two or more of his adversary's men standing upon them) his captured man cannot enter, and he cannot play. A point having only one man upon it is called a *blot*, and capturing that man is styled *hitting a blot*. Doublets (two aces, two deuces &c.) thrown may be played doubly; for instance, double sixes entitle the player to move 24 points (if the situation on the board permit) either (*a*) one man 24 points, (*b*) one man 18 points and another 6 points, (*c*) one man 12 points and two others 6 points each, (*d*) two men 12 points each, (*e*) four men 6 points each. Of course, if a player throw six-three, for example, he may move one man 6 points and another 3, or he may advance one man 9 points, but he can move no man to a point held by two of the opponent's men; nor can a man be moved (by the throw six-three, for instance) to the ninth point if both the third and sixth point be covered, that is, have two of the enemy's men upon them. If the third point be vacant, or be a blot, and the ninth point be covered, then the man may be first moved to the third point and the six point must be played with another man. If the third point be covered no man can be moved to the ninth point by that throw. When either player's men have made the circuit of the board, and have reached the player's home board, then he can begin to bear them, or throw them off. For every number thrown a man is removed from the corresponding point, or if the player choose, he may move the man or men further on in the home-board, instead of bearing them. The player, all of whose men are

[174] The writer recalls one dear lady of clear judgment, and of warm sympathies, and blessed with a spirit unflinchingly fearless and a mood uniformly cheerful, who, after three score years of active existence, found rest and recreation in the pleasure and interest yielded by the venerable game "within the tables." Daily after dinner, she welcomed the appearence of the board, and was prepared to engage any clever adversary until the last hour of the twenty-four had passed away, completing the dial symbolized by the one score and four points of the ancient *nard*, if it may be permitted to extend the simile of the old Persian visier; and this went on until she had long passed her four score and tenth year.

first borne or thrown-off, is the winner. The other prevalent English game, the so-styled "Russian" backgammon, is played in the same way except in two respects. The men are not placed on the board before commencing, but are gradually entered, those of each player in the same table, in accordance with the dice-numbers thrown. The table selected is called the "*entry table.*" If the first player throw five-ace, for instance, he enters two men, one on the ace-point, the other on the five point, counting from the outermost point of the board of entry. If the other player then throw five-trey, he enters a man on the trey point, and with another hits his opponent's blot (the five point), and removes his opponent's man there placed, putting it outside the board with the unentered men, and it has to be re-entered. This process goes on until a player has entered all his men in the board of entry. He then begins to advance his pieces through the tables to the remotest table, where they are to be borne or thrown off, the first player to throw off all his men being the winner—all exactly as in the ordinary backgammon. The other feature which is different in the Russian game, is the treatment of doublets. If a player throw doublets, he not only plays them doubly, but afterwards he may again play doublets, that is those on the opposite sides of the dice, and after that be done, he is permitted to have a second cast of the dice. If he then chance to throw doublets again, the whole process is repeated. Thus, if he throw cinques (double fives), he plays four fives, then four deuces (the number on the reverse of the dice), and then throws again. All this is done, whether he be entering or advancing his men. In England, however, but generally not in America, the privilege of the second throw is denied to either player when he throws his very first set of doublets. As stated, other varieties of backgammon are now rarely played in the English lands. It is well to call attention to the fact that this long existing English backgammon (Alfonso's "todas tablas") is not described in the British Museum "Tables" MS.

Of the other varieties known and practised in Great Britain, the oldest is *fayles* (*failes?*), which goes back not only to the time of the British Museum MS, but even to that of Alfonso, in the former of which it is described under the name of *faylys* (see p. 164) and in the latter under that of *fallas*. It would seem to have been practised as late as the time of Ben Jonson, who mentions it in the same line with *tick-tack* (see p. 88, *note*). Francis Douce (d. 1834), the antiquarian, may have derived his brief description of it from the British Museum MS. Of the 15 men, 13 were placed, at the beginning, on the sixth point in the table to the right of one player and the left of the other, and the other two on the ace-point of the adversary in the table opposite. The other player's 15 men occupied the two points directly opposite. He who first bore his men won; or if one party threw a number which could not be played, he was at once declared the loser.

We shall now copy the whole backgammon section of the "Compleat Gamester" (1754), partly to give an idea of the varieties at that date known in England, partly on account of the quaint language of the descriptions, which is, except in the case of *verquere* and the "grand trictrac," virtually the same as that employed in the first edition of the work in the third quarter of the XVIIth century. Our extracts include pages 229-250, the first relating to *verquere*: "All the table-men are placed on the ace-point, where you set the two men at back-gammon; and as at that game, bring them

round into your own tables, but with different circumstances; for you are not allowed to make a point in either of your tables, next your adversary, the farther ace-point excepted, for there you may do it as your discretion does best direct you; but you may take as many points in your own tables as you think good, to advantage your game, and by so doing, to hinder your adversary from approaching you, or by the luckiness of his throw to get the better of it. In the next place, you are to observe, that this game is commonly played double and single; the double is called John, which is a particular advantage your adversary gets over you, if his luck in throwing be extraordinary: but you can never be john'd except you have more men than you can enter upon six points, that is to say, 7 men, which is 1 more than your points will bear; and in such a case you must yield the double, and consequently your game is in danger to be lost. Note, that tho' you always point as your cast affords you convenience, and to the best advantage of your game, yet you cannot enter two men upon any point, and in that particular this game is more remarkable than any other played upon the tables. You play doublets, and at last bear away all your men, as at back-gammon, and the art is in managing your throws to make your game proper; for this, whilst your adversary, by ill throwing, or indifferent management lags behind, is very convenient for you to be skilled at. Note also, that when you have more men to enter, than you have opened points to receive them, you are to let your adversary throw; which I have seen for a considerable space of time; until by playing his men forward (contriving as much as possible he can, to gain the preheminence [*sic*], and put back your game) he makes room for you by a vacancy; else, perhaps, the nature of this diversion is such, that the game may hold out a long time, there being no possibility of going on, till you have the privilege, by his opening the passage for you on the tables, to enter your remaining men. Note too, that if you hit any of your adversary's men, by a fortunate cast of your dice, and that he has the favourable fortune presently after, to hit you again: in such a case, which, indeed, is not very common, if there be not room for you to enter in his tables, nor for him to perfect the advantage of this throw to enter in your's, it is the nature of this game, that you must lose it double, you being the first to throw. This, and the rest of the accidents of verquere, are like most other games, to be understood, and avoided, by experience in play." The next game to be considered is the *Grand trictrac*, which we are told in the introductory lines "is a French diversion: and most commonly used by persons of the first quality," which assertion most likely means that this form of the game never became popular in England. The writer goes on to say: "It is thus played: table-men are to be placed on the side of the tables. Next, it is also to be observed; that besides the table men, with which you play, there are 3 other pieces to be used, called markers, whether half crowns, or halfpence, or any other coin: these are to mark the throw of your dice, on the points of the tables which are advantageous to you: for example, if in your first tables you make single toots, in 3 casts, or throws, you mark with one marker 4. There are 12 holes on the sides of your tables, with pegs in them, for the use of this game. Note then, that 12 marks gained on the points of your tables, make an hole, and 12 holes make up the game, if you agree to it; else less, or more: If you fill up your points, for every single throw on the dice, you make 4, and for doub-

lets 6; and may hold your game as long as you think convenient, that is, play on without breaking up your own, and your adversary's, if you believe you shall get no advantage by beginning again. If you hold with your double men in your tables, before you can make a point, and your adversary cannot fill his tables, you are obliged with your man to pass over into his tables, tho' it be commonly a disadvantage; but if he throws so well, as to fill up, then it alters the matter, and you cannot pass. Note, that when you have marked 12 without your marker, which, as I said before, makes up 1 hole, you may go off, break up your tables, and begin again, provided you have the dice; or else you cannot. If in playing this game, you touch a man rashly, as intending to play it, and think to change it for another, you are obliged to play it as you before intended. Note, as to those men that are obliged to pass over into the adversary's tables, if he hits them, he marks thus: for every single throw 4; for doublets 6; and if at any time, by your good fortune in throwing, you can mark over and above 12, you must then mark a hole, or else 2, if you go double, and the overplus remaining is called to the good, provided you do not break your game: you cannot go off, nor break your tables by your adversary's throws. And note, that if you chance to make more or less than is right, it is in his power to take the advantage, put you back, or oblige you to mark full. This is what is most considerable in your first tables. Now, as to your adversary's second tables: for every man you hit of his with a single die, you mark but 2; and for doublets 4; tho' in his first tables, 4 for each single die, and 6 for doublets. If you chance to hit a blot or two in your adversary's tables, and cannot pass, by reason of his man standing in your way, and hindering you, it is allowable for him to take the advantage of marking by your own throws in both tables, as before-mentioned. The ace-point of both corners in the second tables, cannot be divided here, nor fill the corners, as at other games; tho' in lieu of that convenience, if the dice favour, for each single cast, you mark 4; and for doublets 6. Then as that part of the game, called gens des retour, or the back-game, which is the latter part; next, bearing off your men, as it is used at back-gammon, you play your men as fast as you can, into his tables, endeavouring to fill up the points, as at the fore-game; which being done, you bear off your men; only there is one distinction between this and back-gammon (noted before) that as doublets thrown at the last cast gives considerable advantage to the gamester there, it is here of no value, nor gives any addition to the throw. Note, that if at any time you break up your tables, and disorder your men, except by gaining 12 points, you can mark a hole, it is in your adversary's power to oblige you to hold your game on still, and to play all the table-men you have so touched and disordered to his own advantage. Note, also, that we distinguish the single from the double in this manner: if your adversary, by his ill fortune in throwing, has no points on his tables marked, altho' your throw is single, yet still you may mark a double point; but if, otherwise, he has such good luck by the dice, to have any point to mark, then he comes double; which you are to take off again, if you can hit him. These are all the passages that are considerable in this game; which tho' easily to be comprehended, by those who divert themselves with playing often at tables, and especially such who have any skill in tick-tack, of which, this game is observed to make a compleatment, by adding more parts and embel-

lishments; yet the most ready way for a young gamester, who is desirous to learn it, is to see it performed by two gamesters; and then taking notice of these instructions, he will presently be let into the secret."

Irish was certainly at one time, as we have been able to see by the citations concerning it, a favorite diversion. The "Gamester" thus describes, not with too much lucidity, the method of playing it: "Irish is an ingenious game; and requires a great deal of skill to play it well, especially the after-game; it is thus played: The men, which are 30 in number, are equally divided between you and your adversary, and are thus placed: 2 on the ace-point, and 5 on the side of your left-hand table, and 3 on the cinque, and 5 on the ace-point of your right-hand table, answered on the like points, by your adversary's men, with the same number; or thus, 2 of your men on the ace-point; 5 on the double sice, or sice-cinque point, 3 on the cinque point in your tables, and 5 on the sice-point at home; and all these pointed alike by your adversary. In your play have a care of being too forward; and be not too rash in hitting every blot, but with discretion and consideration, move slowly, but securely; by which means, tho' your adversary has filled his tables, but with all blots, and you by hitting him, enter, you may win the game; nay, sometimes, tho' he hath borne his men all to a very few. It is the part of a prudent commander, as he leads out his men, to bring them home as safe as possible: So must you have a care of your men as you are bringing them home, that they are not picked up by the way. Have a special care that your adversary double not the trey-ace-point with his men; and so make what convenient haste you can to fill up your own tables, and beware of blotting: that done, bear as fast as you can. For an after-game, I know not what instructions to give: You must herein trust to your own judgment, and the chance of the dice; and if they run low for some time, it will be so much the better." The difficulty here is to determine exactly what an "after-game" is, or was. From the space given to it (ten pages) it will be noted that the variety, known then as now by the simple name of *backgammon*, was the most notable of all the English games "within the tables." We omit the "Gamester's" account of it, since the method of play does not differ from that portrayed in our modern handbooks.

The next game is *tick-tack*, which is thus described: "All your men must stand on the ace-point, and from thence play forward; but have a care of being too forward, or so, at leastwise, that doublets reach you not. Secure your sice and cinque-point, whatever you do, and break them not, unless it be when you have the advantage of going in; which is the greatest advantage you can have, next to a hit: for your adversary's 11th point standing open, you have, it may be, the opportunity of going in with two of your men, and then you win a double game. A hit is but 1; and that is, when you throw such a cast, that some one of your men will reach your adversary's unbound, but sometimes, tho' it hits it, will not pass, by reason of a stop in the way; and then it is nothing. Sometimes it is good, going over into your adversary's tables; but it is best for an after-game. Playing close at home is the securest way; playing at length is both rash and unsafe; and be careful of binding your men when you lie in danger of the enemy. Moreover, if you see you are in danger of losing a double game, give your adversary 1; if you can, it is better doing so than losing 2. Here note, if you fill up all

the points of your second table with your own men, you win 2; and that you may prevent your adversary from doing so (if you are in danger thereof) if you can, make a vacant point in his tables, and it is impossible for him to do it. This is the plain game of tick-tack, which is called so from touch and take; for if you touch a man you must play him, tho' to your loss; and if you hit your adversary, and neglect the advantage, you are taken with a why-not, which is the loss of 1: likewise if you are in, and your cast is such that you may also go into your adversary's 11th point, by 2 other men, and you see it not, either by carelessness or eager prosecution of a hit, which is apparent before your eyes, you lose 2 irrecoverably. Besides, it is a very great oversight, as your men may stand, not to take a point when you may do it. Now some play this game with toots, boveries, and flyers; toots is when you fill up your tables at home, and then there is required small throws; for if you get over with a sice, you have no benefit of toots. Boveries, is when you have a man in the 11th point of your own tables, and another in the same point of your adversary's, directly answering. Flyers, is when you bring a man round the tables before your adversary hath got over his first table; to the effecting of which there is required very high throwing on your side, and very low throwing on his. Much more might be said as to the craft of the play, which cannot be so well discovered, as from observation in your own or others playing." Peculiar here are the singular technical terms, *toots, boveries* and *flyers*, which have been noted, so far as we know, in no dictionary. The explanations given of them in this section are therefore of interest. The first of these words has been used in describing a previous variety. The use of *binding* and *unbound* in this paragraph, in the sense of German "binden" and "ungebunden" (see p. 259), is also to be noticed. They are of course connected with the noun "band" or "bund" (a double point); an *unbound* man would, therefore, be the same as "ein *ungebundener* stein," that is, equivalent to the more usual term, *blot*.

The accounts of the three varieties finally enumerated and described are very brief, but doubtless sufficient, considering their slight importance. The first one is, however, of great antiquity, as it is identical with that called "doblet" in the codex of King Alfonso, and "doublets," or "queens game" by Hyde. This is the description of the "Gamester:" "At doublets the 15 men are thus placed; upon six, cinque, and quatre, there are 3 men a-piece; upon trey, duce, ace, but 2 a-piece. He who throws most hath the benefit of throwing first; and what he throws he lays down, and so doth the other; what the one throws and hath not, the other lays down for him to his own advantage; and thus they do till all the men are down; and then they bear, but not till they are down; he who is down first, bears first, and will doubtlessly win the game, if the other throws not doublets to overtake him. Now he who throws doublets apace, is certain to win; for as many as the doublets are, so many he lays down, or bears. For example; if 2 fours, he bears 8, and so for the other doublets; and therefore he who can either nap, top, or hath high runners about him, hath a great advantage herein." Let us compare this with the text of Alfonso describing his "doblet," premising that the latter plays it with only twelve men, so that but two of the men are placed upon each of the six points in the board of each player (instead of two upon three points and three upon each of the other three):

"El otro iuego hay de tablas à que llaman *doblet* que se iuega en esta guisa—Cada uno de los iogadores deve tener las doze tablas [twelve men], e ponerlas dobladas, una sobre otra cada uno en su quadra del tablero, que sea la uno en dereche de la otra; e el que venciere la datalla [who makes the higher throw] lançara primiero. E devense baxar [French "abbasser," lower, that is take the upper man off the point indicated by the dice, and lay it down beside its fellow] aquellas doze tablas, que estan sobre las otras, por las suertes de los puntos de los dados. E otrossi se devan levar; e el que las ante levar [bears], ganara el iuego. Est si por aventura qualquiere de los iogadores lançare suerte, que non tenga tablas de que la fazer tan bien de baxarlas como de levarlas deve fazer el otro iogador [if one player cannot play the man or from or to the point indicated by the dice, the other player has the right to play the cast]. E desta guisa aviene muchas vezes, que ganará ell [*sic*] un iogador par las suertes, que lançara ell otro. E este es el departiemento deste iuego, e esta es la figura del entabliemento" [with a design of the board, displaying the position of the men]. This is the exact description of "les dames rabattues," as doublets is styled in French, given by the Moulidars "Encyclopédie des jeux" (see p. 184).

We finally cite the notices of the last two simple games recorded by the 1754 "Gamester," both of which have apparently been forgotten. The first one is *sice-ace:* "Five persons may play at sice-ace with 6 men a-piece, they one load another with aces; sixes bear only, and doublets drinks and throws again; so have I often seen some who, for the lucre of a little money, have resolved rather to lose themselves than a penny. It is commonly agreed the last two, or the last out, shall lose, and the rest shall go free." Here we encounter the technical term "drinks," of which we have spoken elsewhere. On a later page we shall find that this simple but very old game (going back to the days of Alfonso), though lost in England, is still preserved in another North-European land. The next game is *catch-dolt:* "At catch-dolt, the first throws and lays down from the heap of men without the tables; what is thrown at, it may be sice-duce; if the other throw either sice or duce, and draw them not from his adversary's tables to the same point in his own but takes them from the heap, and lays the ace down, he is dolted, and loseth the game; or if he touch a man of the heap, and then recal himself, the loss is the same. Some by frequent practice will never be dolted, and then they strive who shall fill up their tables first; which done, he who bears them off first hath won the game." The "Compleat Gamester" closes its review of the different varieties of backgammon by exclaiming "So much for games within the tables."

In English there is little literature, except in the books of games, which is specially or exclusively devoted to backgammon. There are translations of Parini's poem and of Merrimée's tale, which we have noticed. A singular anonymous tract, in octavo of twenty-two pages, is preserved in the British Museum, bearing the following title: "Back-gammon: or the battle of the friars, a tragic-comic tale. To which is added, a short essay on the folly of gaming by way of application. Printed for F. Wilfood at the Three Flower-de-Lucés behind the chapter-house in St. Paul's Church-yard 1734." The poem is in the style of the time, and cannot boast any great merit. Such as it is we copy it:

Of two battalions set in rank and file,
And of the various plunder and the spoil
How each th'approaches of the other dreads,
With two sagacious gen'rals at their heads;
How shot the elephantine tooth becomes,
And boxes rattle in the stead of drums;
How luck and skill alternately advance;
The force of judgement, and the pow'r of chance,
Of passions — overflowing in a trice,
And all the dreadful tyranny of dice,
I sing: — instruct me to recount the fray;
And give me patience, — more than when I play!
A doughty friar, Fabris was his name,
Of sober aspect, and of goodly frame,
In table-battles many a foe had slain;
And was become the champion of the plain.
Wiser in art, he bolder grew in arms,
And all the country dreaded his alarms.
The holy brotherhood with terror struck,
All the lay-herd were victims to his luck:
The males against him never could succeed,
And all the weaker sex were weak indeed.
For in this table-war the fair engage,
And make sometimes an Amazonian age.
Nothing could stop the friar's warm career;
Some fell for want of fortune, some for fear:
In num'rous conflicts he had never fail'd;
When art fell short, th'almighty dice prevail'd.
Thus the great Swede triumphantly went on
And battles, without number, battles won;
Vanquish'd his enemies without controul;
The hardy Russian, and the rugged Pole.
But let not this, my friend, elate thy mind;
Survey the dubious casualties behind:
See the great Charles at last to fortune yield!
At last view Peter master of the field!
Hence caution learn: o! learn to be afraid,
And keep secure the conquests thou hast made;
Lest thou art forc'd thy trappings to resign,
And the renown'd Pultowa's fate be thine.
The friar's fame, extended far and near,
Had reach'd at last a brother friar's ear.
He too in table-battles early taught,
From alma mater had the science brought
Proposing wisely some diversion hence,
If doom'd to toil in Essex or the Fens.
Vituleo deem'd it but a pious care,
Both to revenge the holy and the fair;
And expectation of the coming sport,
Made a long, sultry, tedious journey short.
They met: and dauntless at the fatal board
The signal gave. — Size quatuor was the word.
Fabris, with pleasure sparkling in his eyes,
Braves his new foe, and his art defies:
He then his troops in martial order plac'd;
Vituleo did the same, and boldly fac'd:
(His valiant troops the olive colour boast,
And Fabris led the Ethiopian host).
The battle moves: the wary chiefs look round
To see, and gain th'advantage of the ground.
For the first onset Fabris did prepare,
And quator size began the mighty war.

(This was a service he perfom'd by rote,
And got the point that suited with his coat).
Vituleo then, two sixes by his side,
Came rushing forward with a manly stride.
Fabris as yet conceal'd his inward pain,
Duce ace oppos'd, but oh! oppos'd in vain:
Homeward three paces mov'd he singly stood
And stopt directly in Vituleo's road.
This is my pris'ner, sir, Vituleo cries,
And if he meets me once again, he dies.
Fabris attempts to place him in the field,
And sixes were his buckler and his shield.
With those, alas! he no admittance found:
The enemy began to seize the ground.
With treys into an empty space he ran,
And got a guard too for his naked man.
Trois ace for Fabris did admittance gain,
And he possess'd him of the homeward plain.
Duce ace stept forth, and took him on the pate;
He falls a victim to his adverse fate:
And when he came again, he came too late.
No room for his untimely quators now;
Two treys again pursu'd the fatal blow,
Filling a space and moving forwards too.
Fabris attempts the trenches once again;
But cinque and quator made th'attempt in vain,
Vituleo presses on with cinque and duce,
And made the future blows of little use.
This for a rampart he design'd to keep,
Or'e which the nimblest warrior could not leap.
In safety now the olive squadrons move;
In vain the Ethiopian pris'ners strove,
In number three; they could no farther go,
Coop'd up within the trenches of the foe.
The friar almost did his faith renounce,
And lost a triple victory at once.
Another battle Fabris then demands;
But found that fortune had forsook his hands:
Quite vanquish'd he began to sue for peace;
And stil Vituleo's triumphs did increase.
A little truce concludes th'unequal fight,
And this like others, ended with the night.
The morn advanc'd Vituleo was the same;
And Fabris did the whole creation blame;
The ruder passions to expression swell,
And the poor faultless dice are wish'd at h—ll.

In the "Penny Magazine," (new series vol. 10,1841, pp. 100-101) there is an essay on "Backgammon," to which the author's name is not attached. The magazine was in that day a popular publication, published by the "Society for the diffusion of useful knowledge." The slight historical information which the writer endeavors to give is of the usual sort. He extracts from a book of epigrams and epitaphs, called "Wits recreations" (1663), an epitaph on one John Crop, a backgammon player, in which, as will be seen, the game is still called tables:

Man's life's a game at tables, and he may
Mend his bad fortune by his wiser play;
Death plays against us, each disease and sore
Are blots; if hit, the danger is the more

To lose the game; but an old stander by
Binds up the blots, and cures the malady,
And so prolongs the game: John Crop was he,
Death in a rage did challenge for to see
His play; the dice are thrown; when first he drinks,
Casts, makes a blot, death hits him with a cinque:
He casts again, but all in vain, for Death
By th'after game did win the prize — his breath.
What though his skill was good, his luck was bad,
For never mortal man worse casting had.
But did not Death play false to win from such
As he? No doubt, he bare a man too much.

The word "drinks" in the ninth line has evidently a technical sense. It occurs in one other place which we have noticed, namely, in the first and following editions of the "Compleat Gamester," in the brief account of the game of sice-ace, in which we are told that "sixes bear only, and doublets *drinks* and throws again." It is difficult to say what it means, as we find it in no dictionary. Possibly it is a way of stating that doublets *are played twice*, and then the statement is made that the thrower of doublets, has another cast, as in Russian backgammon; or "drinks" may mean that doublets do not count in the game, but the thrower must cast again. In the preceding phrase we are told that sixes can only be used in bearing (or throwing off) the men. But the whole description (of nine printed lines) in the "Gamester" is, as will be remembered, obscure enough.

The "Penny Magazine" proceeds to quote from Burton's "Anatomy of Melancholy" (part ii, section 2) on the tendency of such "honest recreation" as "cards, tables and dice, shovel-board etc." to foster gaming and other vices. From that the author goes on to discuss "tric-trac and tic-tack," citing the absurd derivation of the latter ("touch and take") from the "Compleat Gamester," and afterwards quotes from a volume of essays, entitled "Horæ vacivæ" (1646) by John Hall of Durham, who asserts "that tic-tack sets a man's intentions on their guard. Errors in this and war can be but once amended." Then he draws upon Strutt's "Sports and Pastimes," citing the statement there given that Dean Swift once wrote to a friend in the country, asking him: "In what esteem are you with the vicar of the parish? Can you play with him at backgammon?"—evidence of the devotion of the rural clergy to the game. He has taken it for granted that backgammon is of Anglo-saxon origin, and therefore closes by saying that its continued existence is a proof of the slight changes made by the Norman conquest. [175]

As to the nations of Eastern Europe, many of them appear to have known the old game of tables, though at a comparatively late day. The dice game reached them earlier, and pretty certainly from Southern or Byzantine Europe. The word for "die" in many of the Slavic nations (in Russia, *koste, kostoke*, in Polish and Bohemian *kostka*), has its origin in the word for "bone." In western Europe there is no such connection between "die" and the material of which it is made, unless it be in the case of the Icelandic

[175] At the close of the section treating of backgammon in England, in spite of the fact that we have already discoursed of the method of playing the venerable and most popular of the English varieties, we add one of the clearest and briefest descriptions of it known to us: "The game is played by two players, who have each fifteen men (usually draughtmen)

tenning, which the dictionaries make a derivative from *tönn*, "tooth," since early Icelandic dice were made from walrus-teeth. Perhaps the development of the word was aided by the resemblance of the dice to "little teeth." *Kostka* is said by the Bohemian dictionaries to be a diminutive of *kost*, "bone." In Russian, dice-play is *igrá* (= game, play) *ve koste*; in Polish, *grac w kostki* is "to play at dice;" and in Bohemian, dice-play is *hra v kostky* — all cognate expressions. There is no verb to be compared with the German "doppeln." The points on the dice seem to be styled "eyes" in Russian and other Slavonic dialects, as in German, but whether this term is in imitation of the German is not ascertainable. No special word for "ace" seems to be discoverable in any accessible Russian dictionary; *tuéje* is to be found as a rendering of the German "daus;" it may be the French "deux." In Polish, ace is translated *jednojka* by one authority, which means also "one-eyed," and "daus" is rendered by "tuz," which may be a loan-word from the German. The Bohemian dictionary gives us *eso* for ace, and *taus* for deuce, evidently derived from the German. It would seem that the other points are designated as "third eye," "fourth eye," and so on. In a single Bohemian dictionary "dice-box" is translated by *vrhavka*, which appears to mean a "thrower." In the same tongue the German "pasch," in the form of *pas*, is given by some lexicographers; and there are the following derivatives of *kostka* ("die"): *kostkár*, "dice-player;" *kostkárstvi* "dice-mania;" *kostkovati*, "throw dice," "play-dice," "dice" (the verb; "*pasovati*," is found in a Bohemian-German lexicon rendered by

one set being black and the other white. In beginning the game the men are placed on the board in the manner shown in the following diagram, (fig. 21) — two men on the ace-point on each side, five on the six-point, three on the eight, and five on the twelve. The two dice are common to both players, but each one has his own dice-box, and throws are taken alternately. The dice are perfect cubes, marked with dots from one to six. French terms are commonly used; thus, one is called *ace*; two, *deuce*; three, *tré* (*trey* or *trois*); four, *quatre*; five, *cinque*; and six, *size*. At every throw the two dice are employed; consequently the player may throw from two (double-ace) to twelve (double-six). If the player throw *doublets*, or two dice of one number, he counts double the number of dots on each dice; thus, by a throw of double-two, he does not count four, but eight. Suppose the table, as arranged in the diagram, to be placed between the players, whom we will call black and white. The men move towards their ace-points, and are governed in their moves by the throws of the dice. Thus, white counts round from the ace-point of black, and black counts round from the ace-point of white. These points are seen to have severally two men on them, on opposite corners of the table. The grand object of the game is for each player to get all his men played round into his inner table, removing them from point to point agreeably to the throws of the dice — white's course being, as stated above, from black's ace-point (1) to black's twelve-point, and then from his own 12 to his own inner table (6-1), and black's course being the reverse of this, from white's ace-point (1) through white's both tables and black's 12-1 to white's inner table (6-1) — and finally *bearing them* or moving them off the board. The player who first clears his men off the board wins the game. In throwing, the number upon each die may be reckoned by itself, or collectively with the number on the other die. Thus, if *quatre* be thrown by one die, and *size* by the other, one man can be advanced four points, and another six points; or a single man can be advanced ten points — always providing a point is open to allow this movement to it. If doublets are thrown, four men may be moved as many places

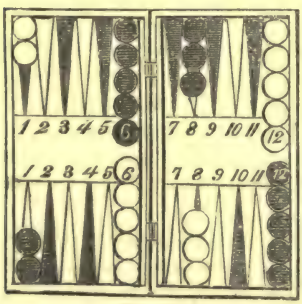


Fig. 21.

the German verb "paschen"). In Russian there is an old word *tablé*, derived of course from the Latin "tabula," and representing the English and French "tables," the name of the mediæval game. In a Russian-German dictionary *tablé* is rendered by "triktrak," "tokkatille." In the same work "puffspiel" is explained as *igra ve phuke*, literally "game of puff(?)"— it being possible that *phuke* may be the German "puff" transferred to the Russian vocabulary. The matter is very complicated; a Russian lexicologist explains *phuke* as "blasen (eines damensteins)," "the blowing (puffing) of a draughtman." This should represent the English "huff" or "huffing," used as a technical term in draughts, and defined in the "Century Dictionary" thus: "In checkers [draughts] the removal of a player's piece from the board when, having the chance, he refuses or neglects to capture one or more of his opponent's pieces. The latter may however, if he deems it to his advantage, demand the capture instead of removing the piece. The removal is generally marked by blowing on the piece. The verb "to huff" is sometimes applied to chess in the same sense." In German, instead of *blasen* ("blow"), the word *pfeifen* ("whistle") is sometimes used. Perhaps this latter is the original of *phuke*. But what has all this to do with backgammon? It is difficult to say. *Phuke* does not seem to be a Slavonic vocable, nor does the lexicographer, under it, say anything about backgammon, while he renders the German "damenspiel" by *shashechna igra*, literally "game of draughtmen," the singular, *sháshka*, meaning "draughtman." The more common name for the modern backgammon appears to be in

as there are dots on the dice, instead of one or two, as may be done in the case of ordinary throws. Thus, suppose you throw two deuces, you may move one man eight places, two men four places, or four men two places, always presuming that the road be clear. No man can be moved to a point covered by two of your opponent's men. If such point be covered by only one man — which is called a *blot* — then that man can be hit and be removed from the point, and placed on the bar between the tables, and his place taken by the man who has won it. The removal of a man to the bar throws the player to whom it belongs considerably behind in the game, because the man must remain out of play till he is *entered* by a throw of the dice turning up the number corresponding to one open point on the adversary's table — the man, or men out, being entered by replacing them according to the throws of the dice, on the points of the opposite player's inner table, but such entering can only take place on points, not having two or more of the adversary's men on them — after which he is brought round in the same way as are the others in the set to which he belongs. The frequent occurrence of this *taking of a blot* gives an adversary a great advantage, and allows him to win his *gammon*. If at any time during the game, every point to which you might move is covered by the adversary's men, your men must remain *in statu quo*, and the adversary takes his turn; or if only one man can be played you must play it. We must explain that there are three kinds of victory — one the winning the *hit*, the second the winning the *gammon*, and the third winning a *backgammon*. The player who has played all the men round into his own table, and by fortunate throws of the dice has borne or played the men off all the points, wins the *hit*. The *gammon* may be thus explained: — When you have got all your men round to your own table, covering every point, and your adversary has a man out, then you are enabled to *bear* or lift your men away. This you do by throwing the dice and removing from the points corresponding to the spots on the dice. If you can bear all your men away before your adversary has borne off one man, you win the gammon, which is equivalent to two games or *hits*. But if your adversary is able to bear one of his men, before you have borne all yours, then your victory is reduced to a *hit*. If the winner has borne all his men off before the loser has carried all his men to his own table, it is a *backgammon*, and held equal to three hits or games." This account is extracted from the anonymous "Boy's own book; new edition, London 1889," (pp. 619-20). The same volume contains an acting account of "Backgammon, a pantomime charade in three scenes," (pp. 79-81) — the first scene representing the syllable "back," the second "gammon," and the third the whole word.

Russian *triktrak*, in Polish *tryktrak*, and very likely some form of the same French vocable may be used in Bohemia. In Polish a derivative of the Latin "tabula" exists, but we have not discovered that it is or has been applied to a game, but it probably was in early times. For "man" at backgammon, the word just cited *shdshka*, "draughtman" (which is a diminutive of *shach*, "chess") would seem to be employed in Russia, though the dictionaries likewise have two derivatives from the French "dame," *dama* and its diminutive *damka* in the sense of "man" in table-games. In Polish the word, *warcab*, which looks foreign, is given as the equivalent of "draughtman" (with several derivatives like *warcaby*, the plural, "draughts," *warkabnic*, "draught-player," and *warcaba*, *warcapnica*, "draughtboard"); while *biera*, *bierka* (the latter a diminutive) is rendered "man or piece in table-games," there being nothing to indicate that it is a native word. The former of these words is found in Bohemian, as *vhrcab* (pl. *vhrcaby*), "draughtman" (*hra ve vrhcaby*, being "game of draughts," and *vrhcabnice*, "draughtboard," "board for table-games.") There may be in Bohemian a relic of the old days of "tables" in the word *ostabla* (also written *ostahla*), rendered by the dictionaries "draught-board." There are no derivatives.

Hungarian has also the word *ostábla*, as in Bohemian, but we cannot say whether it is originally Slavic or Magyar. Like the Bohemian word it is translated by "draughtboard," and there are various derivatives, which seems to show that the form is Hungarian: *ostáblaz*, "to play at draughts;" *ostáblajatek*, "draughts" (*jatek* = "game"); *ostáblakarika*, "draughtman" (*karika* = "circle," "ring," "hoop"); *ostáblát játszani* is rendered as "to play at tables" and *ostablazni* has the same signification. The Latin *tabula* is used in various senses under the form of *tábla*, among others in *sakktábla*, "chessboard." *Triktrak* appears to be the most frequent backgammon appellation, though in one dictionary we find the Italian "sbaraglino" rendered by *koczka játék*, which however may mean "a dice-game;" and the German derivative *puf* is apparently not unknown. *Koczka* is "die," resembling the Slavic "kostka," with which it may be connected, as it does not seem to have any Hungarian affiliations; it signifies likewise "cube." The chief derivatives are *koczkáz*, *koczkázni*, *koczkázik*, "to play at dice;" *koczkáztat*, "to hazard;" *koczkjaték*, "dice-game," "dice-board" ("backgammon board?"), *koczni*, "to play or throw dice." The dice-box is sometimes called *koczkasorleg*, a translation of the German "würfelbecher," but more usual is *koczkavetö*, *vetö* signifying a "sower." As in so many tongues the dice-pip is an "eye," *szem*; the numerals are prefixed to this word to designate the numbers of the dice-points, thus *egy* ("one") in *egyszem*, "ace;" *ketszem*, "deuce;" *haromszem*, "trey," and so forth. *Pass* is a loan-word; *páros* (German "paar," French "paire," Italian "pari") likewise expresses equal points on the dice, that is, "doublets." The usual proverbial sayings originating in dice-play are not wanting, as: *el van vetoe a koczka*, "the die is cast." Occasionally, in imitation of the German, the redundant word, *koczkö* (kö = "stone"), literally "die-stone," meaning simply "die," is found; while another compound, likewise the result of German influence, is *játékkö* ("gamestone"), signifying "brettspielstein," or "man" at table-games. We know of no Hungarian manual of games which includes backgammon, although the literature of Hungary is rather rich in works relating to chess.

As to Greece we have heretofore (pp. 80-81) cited many early terms in its language connected with dice and dice-games. The modern lexicons repeat most of these, besides adding others, like ταβλιζω, ταβλιτζής, "dice-player," for instance. The word for "die," in later as in older times, is, at least in the literary dialect, κύβος, its signification of "cube" being, probably, a secondary one. It has as many derivatives as those coming from the foreign "tabula"— κυβεία, κυβευμα, "dice-game" or "dice-play;" κυβευτήριον, "place for dice-play," "gambling-house;" κυβεύω, κυβευτής, "dice-player;" κυβευτικος, "skilful at dice," "relating to dice." There are no means of knowing (except in the case of κύβος) how much any of these are used directly in relation to backgammon. If we may believe a recent New-Greek dictionary by a French compiler, Emile Legrand, a good many words connected with the ancient πεττεια game are still in use. His vocabulary includes (we give also his definitions): πεσσός, jeton, pion; πεσσεια, πέσσευμα, "sorte de jeu rapprochant des dames ou du trictrac"; πεσσεῖον, "lieu oú l'on joue à la πεσσεία"; πεσσευτήριον, "table à jouer;" πεσσευτης, πεσσεύω, "jouer à la πεσσεία;" πεσσευτικος (adjective), "de jouer." Again we cannot say whether any of these terms are applied to backgammon. The ancient πεσσεία has been classified by some authors with the Latin "duodecim scriptorum ludus" among the games which may be considered akin to nard. Hyde (ii, 17) gives various forms of the Arabic "zar" ("die"), introduced probably through the Turkish, as occurring in the "lingua romaïca seu greca moderna," namely: ζάρι, ἀζάρι, ἀζάρη, ζάρια; of these, later dictionaries mention only ἀζάρι, defining it as "die," and as "the game of hazard," and ζάρι "cube," "die for playing;" with the derivatives ζαριζω, "to play dice," ζαριστής, "dice-player," and ζαριοπαιγνίδι, "dice-play." We suspect that ζαρι is at least as common as any other term for "die," though we find in the very latest lexicological works this and κύβος (pronounced *kouvos*), and a third appellation, κότσι (perhaps of slavonic origin). In a modern Greek work we meet παίζω (play) ζαρια, to "play or throw dice;" and ὅλα τὰ ζάρια βραίνουν τὸ ἴδιο, meaning to "throw doublets," but expressed by a paraphrase, literally, to "cast dice quite the same." In a German-Greek dictionary we have τάβλι given as "tricktrack-brett" and ταβλίζω as to "play tric trac," which confirms us in the belief that this old word is the ordinary name for the game, though the French "trictrac" is very likely also used, as elsewhere. In the same dictionary πεσσεία and all its derivatives are omitted; they therefore hardly belong to the language of daily life. The French "pion" (πιόνι) is employed for draughtsman (though not for "pawn" at chess), and is therefore probably made use of for "man" at backgammon. For draughtboard there seems to be no single word but το αβακιον (board, abacus) τῆς ντάμας (literally "board of draughts") expresses it in a roundabout way. In the same manner the dice-box is described in Greek as το κωνι δία τα ζάρια, "the funnel for the dice." The latest dictionary before us also interprets "trictrac" as τάβλι, and a trictrac-board as ἕνα τάβλι the same word, as in some other languages, being used for both. The notable fact to be gleaned from all this is that τάβλι is in Greece still the customary name of the nard game; so that all the countries on the north shore of the Mediterranean yet maintain the mediæval name, "ludus tabularum," ("tables") in one form or another. Spain ("tablas"), Portugal ("tabulas," partially crowded out perhaps by "gamão,") both preserve the plural form of the

Middle Ages; Italy ("tavola reale") and Greece (τάβλι), employ the singular. Of other coast-lands of the Mediterranean we shall have something to say directly. We do not know of any publications in the Hellenic tongue treating of backgammon. The local history of the nard begins naturally with the latest centuries of the Byzantine empire. We know that chess (ζατρίκιον) was played at the Byzantine court in the first quarter of the XIIth century, coming thither from the Arabic east, as is indicated by the name given to it. Tables, whether arriving from the East or the West, should have soon followed it.

In all the Southern Mediterranean lands from Turkey to Morocco, the name of the game is *taula* (*au* pronounced like *ow* in "now"), identical with "tabula" and "tavola." Whether the name came from the Latin direct or through the Byzantine Greek, or through the Venetians, may be a moot question; it is a question, too, whether the appellation has extended to the farther Arabic lands, Arabia, the coasts of the Persian gulf, Zanzibar; nor is the name used in modern Persian quite certain, though the dictionaries seem to imply that *nard* is still the title in that country. In that excellent and too little known Arabic dictionary of the Swedish scholar Berggren (1844), we are told that trictrac in Syria is *daqq* or *towli*. The former word signifies "knocking," "ringing" in its original sense, and may in this meaning be quasi onomatopoetic as the lexicographers assert "ticktack" to be. *Towli* is, of course, *tawla* (Berggren transliterates it elsewhere *thawlé*). In modern Egyptian, *li'b et tawla* is "the game of backgammon;" it is a most common diversion in the bazaars and cafés of the valley of the Nile and in other Arabic-speaking lands. It is not improbable that backgammon, in the Levantine regions, in the shape it has taken, may be of Venetian origin, rather than Byzantine. The pronunciation of the name, which seems to show no trace of an old *b*, but rather of a *v*, is an argument in favor of that view. The fact that chess in the Levant (Greece, Turkey, Egypt) keeps the old Arabic name is noteworthy, since there is no trace in that region of the present or any modern use of the word "nard." The usual word for "die" in Turkey and in the Arabic countries is *zâr* (plural, in vulgar Arabic, *zarât*). The dictionaries of the classical tongue sometimes give it as *zahr*. It is a most interesting vocable, having gone, as we have seen, in the days of the Turkish domination, into Modern Greek, and being, according to most lexicologists, the source of the word "hazard" in English (in mediæval Latin *zardum*, in Italian *azzardo*); and, as we have noticed (p. 84), a Bolognese canonical writer of the XIVth century speaks of "ludus azari," referring to dice-play, while in early Italian the dice-game was called "zara." If the vocable be pure classical arabic, it may be from the stem to which *zahr*, signifying "flower," belongs, springing, possibly, from the flower-like appearence of the sides of the die—the black spots on a white ground. Some of the dictionary-makers believe that *ka'b* (pl. *ku'ub* or *ak'ab*) also represents the word "die" in certain Arabic regions. This may or may not owe its origin to the Greek κυβός. On the other hand, Salmoné, in his late lexicon of the classical tongue, does not give the definition of "die" to *zahr*, but attaches the signification of "dice" to the plural of quite a different word. We have no information as to the variety of backgammon played by the modern Arabs. That, as Lane in his "Modern Egyptians" asserts, it is one of the most usual diversions, every observant traveller can

testify. As to the Persian *nard*, that well-known authority on all eastern table-games, Karl Himly, has a somewhat obscure article on it in the "Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen gesellschaft" (1879, XXXIII, pp. 679-81). If we understand him rightly the men at the beginning of the game occupy the following positions (see fig. 20): White's men 5 on M, 2 on A, 3 on R and 5 on T; Black's men just opposite these points namely, 5 on N, 3 on H, 5 on F and 2 on Z. White is supposed to sit in front of N-Z and Black in front of M-A. The brief sketch of the rules which he gives seems to show that the mode of play as closely resembles that of the ordinary English game, as does the arrangement of the men. It is virtually the "toutes-tables" variety, which perhaps confirms our idea of its age. But as the modern European chess, and not the old "caturanga" is now played in India, it is difficult to state whether the modern English nard-backgammon may not have been introduced into Persia.

In 1639, near Gallehuus in Southern Jutland, then, as now, belonging to Denmark, there was found a horn of gold, two feet nine inches in length and weighing six pounds and thirteen ounces. On the outside of the horn, which was divided into ring-like divisions, were many figures and ornaments. In 1734, a few paces away from the site of the first find, was discovered a similar drinking-horn, weighing seven pounds and eleven ounces, which, besides elaborate ornamentation, had also a Runic inscription encircling the base or larger end of the horn. Both these remarkable horns found their way ultimately to the royal cabinet at Copenhagen, were stolen by a burglar on May 4th 1802, and melted down. Fortunately drawings of them had been made at an early day, though not with the accuracy of the archæological draughtsmen of to-day. Among the scenes depicted on the 1639 horn were, on the third ring from the smaller end, two figures, holding up, each with a hand on its opposite sides, a square tablet. This tablet was in an upright position, and around its inner margin were regularly arranged, close to the edge of each side, a row of sixteen small discs. This square tablet has been explained by some writers as a tables-board, and as late as 1838 this opinion was held (see the "Annaler for nordisk oldkyndighed," Copenhagen 1838-9, p. 152). But the perpendicular position of the board and expecially the number and arrangement of the discs or counters make this view an impossible one. But there is no doubt that the game of tables was in vogue in Denmark at an early time. It was called *tavl*, a genuine old word, which occurs in some of the ancient ballads and elsewhere. So close were the connections with Germany that "wurfzabel" would have readily made its way across the border. The Danish also has (now, with its derivatives, obsolescent) the word *dobbel*, a congener of the German (or north German) "doppel" (see pp. 248-8). It apparently lost, at a very early day, its signification of "dice-play," and took on the meaning of "gambling" or "illicit play." It has the derivatives *doble* (German "doppeln"), to "play games of chance," "stake money unlawfully;" *dobler*, *dobbelbroder*, "gambler;" *doblelaug*, *doblelag*, "fraternity of players." An old Danish law-code declares that *Ingen er pligtig til at betale hvis han i dobbel taber*, "nobody is obliged to pay if he loses at *dobbel*." *At disse kluber hverken ere drikkegilder eller doblelaug*, "that these clubs are neither drinking concerns nor gambling fraternities," says Rahbek, a Danish essayist and scholar a century ago. Christian Molbech, the Danish lexicographer, states only

under *dobbel* in his Danish dictionary (1833) that the word is of uncertain origin. But in the second volume under *tavl*, of which we have been speaking, he makes a suggestion which is not without interest. He cites as cognate with *tavl*, the Anglo-saxon "tæfl," "tæbl" ("dice," "alea" is his dubious definition), and "teblere" ("aleator"), and then refers the student to *dobbel* and *doble*. He has previously said *sub voce* that "dobbeln is the Low German form of "doppeln." It does not seem impossible that this stem *dobl* may have been formed from the Latin "tabula," like *tavl*, or at least have been influenced by it. This, however, is a question for linguistic students. But to return to *tavl*. The chief derivatives are *tavlbord*, *tavlbræt*, "tables-board;" *tavlleg*, "table-game." How much these are still used we do not know; they all have a more or less antiquated look. Some phrases there are: *at lege tavl* or *spille i brættet*, "to play at tables, or at table-games;" *de legte guldtavl*, "they played at a golden board," is found in a ballad. Then there are the old compounds: *skaktavl*, "chess" or "chessboard," and *vartavl*, a table-game of some sort, no lexicographer seems to know what—*var* being our "ware" in "beware," "aware" and "wary," perhaps. "Die" is *tærning* (from the Icelandic "tenningr" or more modern "teningur); the plural is *tærninger*. *Falsk tærning* is "loaded die;" *tærningbæger* (an imitation of the German) is "dice-box;" *tærningøie* (plural, *-øine*), is dice-pip; *tærningspil*, is "dice-play" or "dice-game;" *tærningspiler* is "dicer." *Tærningfald* is "cast of the dice;" the Danish poet, Conrad Malthe Bruun (1775-1826), in later years more famous as the French geographer, Malte-Brun, says in a piece of verse:

> Da skal ej mere heldigt tærningfald
> I drikkelaug dig sceptret give.

An earlier poet, Vilhelm Helt (d. 1724), has a line:

> Lykken er deri som i et tærningspil.

"Ace" is *es*, with the plural, *esser*, though the numeral *eet* is modernly used, *sex es* is six-ace; and a common saying, but not a very clear one, is *han er ikke i sit es*, meaning "he is out of sorts." An old (but really German) form is *as*. "Deuce" is simply *to*, "two," or with the affixed article *toen*, "the deuce," and in the same way *treen*, "the tray" (for which *tres* is sometimes used), *firen*, "the four" (or formerly *quatuor* or *quater*), *femmen*, "the five" (or *quinque* or *zink*), *sexen*, "the six" (or *sis* or *ses*). The doublets are ordinarily the plural numerals, *begge aser* (*esser*), "double aces" (or, in old books, *ambesas* or *bezet*); *treer*, "twos" (*begge dauser*, *double deux*, in the foreign manner, "both the deuces"); treer, "threes" (*ternes*, *carmes*); *femmer*, "fives" (*quinis*), and *sexer*, "sixes" (*sonnes*, *sanne*). *To femmer* would be "double fives." "Point" on the backgammon board is *feld* (felt) literally "field," or *pille*, "pillar," "shaft." "Brikke" is the general term for man at table-games (*dambrikke*, being draughtsman,") *brikkerund*, "round as a tableman," being an adjectival derivative; it is also a low German term. "Blots" are *blotte* (*blot* = "naked," "bare") *brikker*; and *baand* is used (as in German) for a "covered (doubled) point." There are three names for backgammon, or varieties of it—all foreign words. *Verkehr* is, of course, German, though we have somewhere seen cited or used a Danicised form *forkæring*, which we do not, however, find in the

dictionaries; *toccategli*, *tokkadilje*, both having lexicographical authority, come also through the German; *triktrak* is now, doubtless, the most frequent of the three appellatives. They, as well as the occasional employment of *daus*, and the two descriptions of backgammon games, which we are about to cite, are common enough examples of the German influences which so long prevailed in Danish letters and social life.

There has been really only a single general work on social and table-games, so far as we know, issued in Denmark, but it has appeared in three editions. The title of the original edition is "Nye og fuldstændig dansk spill-bog indeholdende rigtig og tydelig underviisning i de brugeligste kort-spil, saasom l'hombre, quadrille, cinquille piquet, reversy, tresett, taroc, whist o. a. fl. samt grundig anviisning til billard- og schach-spil, verkehr, trictrac, toccategli o. s. v.—Kjöbenhavn. 1786."[176] The compiler (the work is largely a word for word translation of the German "Neue königliche l'hombre") was Johan Christian Melbye (1754-1838), all his life a clergyman on the Baltic island of Bornholm, and author of various Latin tractates on theological themes. The second edition was published at Copenhagen in 1802, with a slightly changed title, edited by S. A. Jørgensen, of whom nothing beyond this fact is known. The third and last edition bore the following title: Nyeste dansk spillebog, indeholdende rigtig og tydelig underviisning i l'hombre, boston- whist-, taroc-, frantssuus-, piquet og alle andre brugelige kort-spil, samt grundig anviisning til billard- og schachspil, verkehr, trictrac, toccategli, dam, domino, gnav, keglespil o. s. v.—Tredie forøgede og efter nuværende tids spillemaade forbedrede oplag.—Udgivet af S. A. Jørgensen.—Kjøbenhavn, 1829 (pp. VIII, 344). The backgammon section fills pages 285-328. It is divided into two portions, *verkehr* (285-295) and *trictrac eller toccategli*, (296-328). They are both reproduced almost literally from the first edition, so that they are to be regarded from a point of view half a century earlier than the book's date. As we have commented fully on the German originals, we shall do no more than make a note of some of the Danish technical terms; the notes to the second article, explaining the slight differences between trictrac and toccategli, are placed at the bottoms of the pages. In *verkehr* we find *huk*=corner, used for the "coin de repos;" *bortslaa*, "cast away," for "hitting" *blotte brikker; huus* ("house") for "home-table;" *junker* as in German; *kaste ind*, "cast in," for "re-enter;" *det første bret*, "first quarter of the board;" *jan*, as in the German original; *udtage* ("take out"), for "bear" or "throw off;" *feld* (possibly a borrowed German form, as the Danish is usually written "felt"), "field" for "point" on the board. In the second section the following terms occur: *doubletter* (plural), "doublets;" the foreign names of the dice-points as previously cited; *marschen* (German, with the post-positive article), the "march" ("marcio,") or progressive movement of the men; *points*, for "game-points;" *delingslist* ("fillet of division") for "bar" in the center of the table; *partie bredouille; jan, jan som ikke kan, janen paa tre kast, janen i to bretter, contrajanen, messeasjan, den lille jan, den store jan* (or else the German *schuster*), *rukjan* (distorted German).

[176] For somewhat fuller titles of the various editions of this work, with critical notes, see the very complete Northern chess bibliography at the end of the second volume of the present work.

In Sweden notices of dice occur not much later than in the other Northern lands. The well-known archæologist Hildebrand, director of the important historical museum at Stockholm, states that what were apparently dice of a crude sort have been found in what is now the southernmost province of Sweden, which date from an early period of the iron age. They are made of pieces of ribs, are oblong and narrow — growing narrower towards one end. The dice from the latest heathen age which have been found buried, are always three in number. They still continued to be oblong, Hildebrand tells us, although not so narrow as the earlier ones. The form, he thinks, is peculiar, since a die, so shaped, must have had great difficulty in falling upon one of its smaller ends, on which the ace and deuce are marked, and which, for deciding the progress and result of a game, are of equal importance with the five and six. From this fact he considers it probable that during the close of the heathen age and the beginning of the Christian, Sweden was not yet in possession of any game in which the moving of pieces from square to square, or from point to point, was determined or regulated by the pips on the dice, as in the present backgammon; but that dice-players were anxious to cast only high points. In a grave, supposed to be that of a Christian, on Björkö, an island in Central Sweden, false dice have been discovered, having the number five on three of the sides. In a later paragraph Hildebrand says that tables (backgammon) was apparently introduced into the North at a time when *hnefatafl* (or *hnettafl*) had long been known and practised. He commits an error in saying in a foot-note, that *zabel* in the German of the Middle Ages was applied to draughts, in contradistinction to *wurfzabel*, which meant backgammon, or as he styles it *brädspel* (properly speaking, this latter word should be a generic name for various table-games). Allusions, in Swedish documents dating from early times, to the different games we are investigating are infrequent, especially when we consider that some of the games must have been very commonly practised, judging by the frequent finding of dice and of table-men. That after their introduction into Sweden they must have continued to be played through the whole mediæval period, we have to take for granted. They were very likely considered to be so simple, as compared with chess, that it occurred to no one to write about them—an opinion shared by Hildebrand.

Dice-play was forbidden, as in other lands, by the early Swedish law. In the ancient code known as "Peder Månssons stridslag" we have the following inhibition: "Vi stadga och förbinda, att ingen skall dobbla eller leka med tärning, vartafvel (?), ... karthenspel eller annan lek om penningar, ty deraf kommer kif och osämja. Hvilke det göra, lägges i jern, och hälften af penningarne, om hvilke de lekte, tage gårdsmästaren, och den andra hälften den som uppenbarade det. Den som tredje resan varde funnen så dobbla eller leka, han skal mista sin lön för en månad, hälften åt konungen och hälften åt honom som dobblaren röjde, och dertill näpsas lekamligen efter konungens skönjan." This runs in English: "We decree that no one shall be permitted to gamble or play at dice, vartafvel (?), cards, or other game for money, for from that practice come quarrels and discord. Those who play are to be cast into irons, and the half of the stakes shall go to the informer. He who shall be condemned a third time for gambling or playing shall forfeit his wages, or salary, for a month, half going to the

king and half to the person who informs against the gambler." Here we have the words *dobbla* (German, "doppeln") and *dobblare* (German "doppler"). Of other words relating wholly to dice-play we have *dobbel*, "dicing," "gambling," "game of chance," *dobblerska*, "female dice-player," all showing the frequency of the diversion, and all having, like the same words in German and Danish, the derived signification of "gamble," "gambling," "gambler," etc. Of other technical dice-terms the Swedish language now has the following: *tärning* (plural, *tärningar*), "die," "dice," with such common sayings as *tärningen är kastad*, *tärningen har blifvit kastad*, "the die is cast," "the die has been thrown"—this wide-spread saying, as the reader will have judged, affording the best evidence of the universality and, to some extent, of the age of dice-play. The compounds of *tärning* are *tärningspel*, "dice-play," "dice-game," but in use is likewise the English "raffle," orthographically *raffel;* and as verbs, *att spela tärning* (to "play dice"), *att kasta tärningar, att spela raffel* and *att raffla* all mean about the same thing. *Tärningspelare* is "dice-player"; and *tärningsbord* is cited as the name given to a board on which dice are thrown. The nouns, *kast* and *kastning*, and the verb, *kasta,* are the usual words for "cast," "throw;" *att få stora kast*, is to "make a high throw;" *att stå sitt kast*, to "stand by one's throw," to "accept the consequences;" *jag står mitt kast*, "I abide by my throw" (also figuratively), and *det får stå sitt kast*, "one must abide his throw," "it may go as it will." But the noun *varp* (from the same stem as the Icelandic verb "verpa") still survives in Swedish, so that one hears both *ett godt kast* and *ett godt varp*, "a good throw." To load or (cog) the dice is *att knipa* (really "pinch") *tärningarna.* "Dice-box" is either *tärningkappa* or, less usually, in imitation of the German, *tärningbägare, kappa* meaning "cup;" *kornett*, the French "cornet," is found in Delen's "Engelskt och svenskt lexikon" (Stockholm 1806); and *kastbägare* (throw-beaker") is given in Carl Heinrich's "Svenskt och tyskt lexikon" (Stockholm 1828); it is likewise styled *brädspelsbägare*, "table-game (backgammon) beaker." *Öga* (plural, *ögon*), literally "eye," is, as in the neighboring Germanic tongues, the term used for the dice-pip; *att få up tio ögon* means to "turn up ten (points) on the dice"; *det stod allenast på ett öga* is, figuratively, "it was within the turn of a die;" but the French *point*, sometimes written as pronounced, *poang*, is likewise used. *Ass* (with a second orthography, *ess*) is "ace," although, as in the case of the other points, the genuine Swedish name of the number *etta*, "an one," is also employed; *dus* is "deuce," as *dus ess*, "deuce ace," with an older orthography, *tus;* but sometimes the ordinary numeral, *två*, is used; and the nominal *tres* (Latin, or corrupted French) is "trey," but equally common is *troja*, a Swedicised form of the French "trois," as *tres ess*, "trey ace," and some of the dictionaries give, in addition, *tria* or *trea; qvart*, and the almost disused *quatuor*, represent the four point, with the ordinary numeral name, *fyra; cinka* or, older, *cinqua*, or, by some writers, *zink*, *sinka* (French "cinq") and less usual, the nominal numeral, *femma,* are the names given to the five-point; *sex*, (or, at an earlier day *sis*, from the French) and its nominal *sexa* are used for the "six" or "sice." *Att slå dus, tres* etc., is to "throw deuce," "trey" and so on. These terms are used in the plural to express the doublets, generally with the addition of *all*, "all:" *ässer all*, "double aces;" *duser all* (older, *dusen par*), "a pair of deuces," "double deuces;" *tres all* (*trojor all*),

"double threes;" *quarter all* (*quator all*), "double fours; *cinkor all*, "double fives;" *sexor all*, "double sixes." We have, in occasional use, *dubletter* ("doublets"), but the simple plural of *all*, which is *allor*, is also employed to express any doublets whatever. There is a conversational phrase, *som sex* ("as six"), which means "very much," and may perhaps be compared with the American "like sixty," which signifies "with great force," "as hard (fast) as possible;" this may be derived from the six-point, or highest dice-pip. Swedish literature affords little that can be quoted in regard to dice, outside of the laws. The great authority on the ancient story, geography and customs of the old North, during the earlier and Catholic period, was Olaus Magnus (died 1568), whose writings, composed in Latin, have been often reprinted in Italy and other lands. He alludes both to dice-play and chess, but only to condemn them because they occupied the time which should be spent in doing good deeds. The women of the courts of the Swedish kings were no less devoted, we are told, to games than the men, and one writer makes the broad statement that from the XIth to the XVth century there was scarcely a lady of the higher classes who could not play either chess or tables (*tafvel*). From the later mediæval period we have a couplet about Queen Christina, the consort of King John, who reigned from 1481 to 1513:

Hon kunde väl skämta med sitt ord
Och tärning kasta öfver tafvelbord.

This doubtless referred to tables (backgammon) rather than to dice-play, for it reads: "She knew how to play with her words, and to throw the dice on the table-board." That the distinction between dice-play and tables was understood at an early day is shown by the palace regulations of King Magnus Eriksson (1316-74) and Queen Margaret (1353-1412), in which one is called *dobbel* and the other *tafvellek*, but later they seemed to be classed together, since Peder Månsson's laws forbid every one to *dobbla med tärning, tafvel*, etc., that is to "gamble with dice and tables," as we have just seen. We should have stated that Peder Månsson, after having spent many years of his earlier life in Italy (where he wrote both his "Stridskonst" and "Stridslag") became bishop of the important see of Westerås, in his Scandinavian birthland, and died in 1534. The text of his brief code of military law relating to gaming is as follows in the accurate edition of Hyltén-Cavallius (published by the Swedish "Fornskrift-sällskap," 1845, p. 29), the heading being, "Dobla mz tærning, taffwel etc.:" "Stadgom wj oc førbywdom ath jngen skal dobla æller leka mz tærning, wartaffwel, karthenspel, æller annan leek um pæninge, thy ther aff komber kiif oc osæmya, hwilke thz gøra læggis j jærnen, oc halffdelen off pæningommen wm hwilke the lekto take gaardz mæstaren, oc annan halff delen then them swa lekto wppenbaradhe Oc then som tridye resona wardher fwnnen swa dobla oc leka, han skal mista sin løn føre en manadh, helffthena konwngenom, oc helfftena honom som doblaren røyde, Oc ther til mz pæffzes likamlika æffther konwngsens skønyan." In the appended glossary the editor explains *wartaffvel* (*vartafvel*) by *brädspel*, that is, backgammon. The text of these remarkable productions on the art and jurisprudence of war was probably written in Italy in 1522.

We have already learned that the Icelandic "tafl," derived from the Latin "tabula," represented at a very early period by a derived form

in every tongue of central and western Europe, took the shape in Swedish of *tafvel*. It was applied generally to the nard-game, and did not become in Sweden, as it did in Iceland, first a generic name for table-games, and then an ordinary appellation of chess. It continued to be, for a long time, the only name of backgammon, and for this reason no such word as *kvâtra* as in Icelandic, ever made its way into the Northern kingdom. Little as is known about the game in mediæval days, still less is to be learned about its story between that time and the appearance of modern Swedish books of games. An early and now very rare Cologne compilation in German from the "De remediis utriusque fortunæ" of Petrarch was reproduced in Swedish in the XVIIth century, but it did not include the section concerning tables, and has now become as seldom as its German original. The chess treatise of Jacobus de Cessolis was also rendered into old Swedish even earlier, but never found its way into print until in our own day. But the early works on tables were never given a Swedish dress. No doubt references to the game may still be found dating from the XVth-XVIIIth centuries, but only after a thorough search in archives, collections of letters, and other such obscure haunts of literature. From the beginning of the XIXth century some knowledge of backgammon may be gleaned from dictionaries, but of course, it is confined merely to technical terms. We shall attempt to examine some of these. The board is styled *bräde*, and in compounds *bord*. Both are, of course, variant forms of our English "board;" the former was adopted from the German *brett*, but grew to be so especially applied to the backgammon-board that *brädespel* or *brädspel* ("board-game") may be said to be the most usual name of backgammon, and was and is so understood unless it be accompanied by some qualifying word or phrase. *Vill ni spela bräde?* is perhaps the most common way of inviting a person to a game of backgammon. The appellations of the various varieties we shall come to later. The name given to the points of the board is *tunga* (plural, *tungor*), our "tongue," but in its technical sense derivable from the German "zunge;" but *horn* (meaning "horn"), *kil*, ("wedge"), *pil* ("arrow") and *fält* ("field," German "feld") are also found in the manuals; while "man" is (as in Danish) *bricka* (plural *brickor*), a Scandinavian, or at least Low German vocable, applied likewise to draughtsmen, and to morrismen, but at chess it is, we believe, less used, its place being there taken by *pjes* ("piece") and *bonde* ("pawn"). *Blotta* (noun), virtually the same as the Danish, is the English "blot," being the nominal form of the adjective *blott* ("bare," "naked," *en blotta bricka*, "a solitary man"); *att blotta* is the corresponding verb, *att blotta en bricka*, to be rendered to "leave a man standing alone," to "make a blot." *Att slå en blotta* is "to hit a blot." *Band* (with the definite article *bandet*) is a double point (two or more men on one point). *Att binda* (to bind) is to form such a point. *Att bryta band* is to remove a man or men, leaving the point a blot. When the points each side of the bar are secured (double points), they are styled *jernband* (iron double-points) or *fars- och morsbanden* ("father's and mother's points). The point next the *hus* ("talon") of either player, when doubled, is known as *janband*. Points on which more than two men stand are often styled *polacker* ("Poles") or *öfverband* ("ofver-points," "plus-points"). *Att hålla i hop sina band* signifies "to keep one's double points together," so as to form a barrier to the advance of the adversary. *Alla* (the singular or collective) is sometimes used for "doub-

lets," when no number is expressed, but more usually the plural *allor* (literally, if one could say so, "alls"). A series of singular names for the various combinations of the two dice exists in Swedish, to which, so far as is known, no parallel is to be found elsewhere. Sixes (*dubbla sexan*) are styled *sexor många*, the latter word being a contraction of *många* ("many"). Fives (*dubbla femman*) are *cinkor* (*sinkor*) *mång*; fours (*dubbla fyran*) are *qvartaner*; threes (*dubbla trean*) are *trallor*; deuces (*dubbla tvåan*) are *dusarne par*, like the English "a pair of deuces;" aces (*dubbla essen*) are *essen par*; six-five is ordinarily known as *sextiofem* (really "sixty five"), or *sex till fem* ("six to five"), or *sex och fem* ("six and five"); six-four as *sextiofyra* ("sixty-four") *sex till fyra*, *sex och fyra*, and so with six-three and six deuce; but after that the two numbers are simply used together, the larger always first, as *sex ess* ("six-ace,") *sinka fyra*, *sinka tre*, *sinka dus*, *quart tre*, *troja dus*, *tres* (*tress*) *ess* and *dus ess*. Some of these forms are probably very old, and are chiefly taken, like many of the terms we have been giving, from the real and ordinary Swedish backgammon. Very notable, in this variety, is the term *munk* (meaning literally "monk"); if one player has finished the game, (that is, according to the English expression, has *borne* or *thrown off* all his men), while his opponent has still some captured men (*slagna brickor*), which he has not succeeded in re-entering, the loser is said to be *munk* (or, as we might say, *monked*), resembling in character our "backgammoned." Now this term *munk* is the Icelandic *múkur* which (as the reader will shortly ascertain), is a contracted form of *múnkur*, the Icelandic word for "monk." What is remarkable in the identity of these two terms is that Denmark, and so far as we know, Norway, do not know any such technical expression—these being lands with which Iceland's relations, for many generations, have been far more intimate than with Sweden. The connection of Iceland and Sweden was much more close in the mediæval period than it has since been; a Swedish navigator, indeed, was, according to tradition, one of the discoverers of the island. To the historical bearing of this common term we may probably have something to say later. The French "talon" (that is, the first or corner point to the left of the adversary, upon which all of each player's pieces at the beginning are stacked in three piles of five each) is styled in Swedish the *hem* ("home"), or *hus* ("house"). This is the point from which the play of each combatant begins. On "bearing" or "throwing off" his men, after they have completed the round of the board, the Swedish player, instead of removing them outside of the board, is apt to place them on this "home-point," so as to have them ready for the commencement of the next game. Therefore, the English term "to bear" is rendered by *att spela hem* ("to play home"), and "bearing" is *hemspel* (or sometimes *uttagning*, "taking out"). — There are in the established Swedish game other remarkable resemblances to the Icelandic game. Instead of finishing his game by "bearing" his men, a player may gain a win (or "winning" as the Icelanders call it) by succeeding at the finish in arranging three of his men on each of the five last points of his "bearing-board;" this is called winning a *dubbelt kronspel* ("double crown-game"), being the *langi múkur* of the Icelanders; if he end the game by arranging five men on each of the three final points, then it is *enkelt kronspel* (a "single crown-game"), the *stutti múkur* of Iceland. If one succeed in placing his men, seven on the uttermost point, five on the next and three on the next to that, the

winning is called *trappspel* ("staircase game"), and if, without throwing off any, he succeed in collecting them all on the final point, it is then styled *uppspel* (about equivalent to "played-up-game"), being exactly the same as the Icelandic *meistari*, or highest possible win. Other terms in this Swedish variety are *huken* ("die hucke" of the Germans, the "coin de repos" of the French), *huk* being doubtless borrowed from the German word; the French *jan* has been introduced into this game, being such a position of one's own men as prevents the re-entering of his captured pieces, while *sprängjan* is when the arrangement of his adversary's men prohibits it; the expression for "to move" is *att flytja* (our "flit"); that for "to take," "to hit" is *att slå* ("to strike"); "to re-enter" a man is *at slå in* or *spela in*, "play in."

We know of no general treatise on games in Swedish earlier than the anonymous "Handbibliothek för sällskapsnöjen eller systematiskt ordnade spel, lekar och konster," (Stockholm 1839), in two stout small octavo volumes, the unnamed compiler being Gustaf Johan Billberg; the second volume opens with *verkehren*, its first section (pp. 7-18) devoted to that sub-variety which is known as *fritt spel*. The first lines explain the German derivation of the game and its name, followed by a Swedish rendering of the so-called Luther verslet: *Dus ess har intet!* | *Sex cinqua ger intet!* | *Men qvart tre* | *Är stedse med.* Then follow a description of the board and men, the names of the dice-points and dice-doublets, the method of arranging the men at the *hus*, explications of the *huk*, *enkel bricka* ("blot"), *band*, and *att slå faute*. This last is when, having a captured piece to be re-entered, while some of his pieces are still remaining in his *hus* (in which case he is forbidden to re-enter them on that point), the player casts the useless throw of double aces and loses his right to play until he throws a higher number; the French *faute* is likewise applied to other situations, when a player is unable to play his throw. An *öppet fält* ("open point") is one on which the adversary has no men. Then we are told that if more blots are hit (or men taken) than there is space for them to re-enter, this is called to become *junker* or *slagen ur brädet* ("put off the board"). It depends upon the *junker's* will either to play in as many of his captured men as he can without throwing, or to wait until he can enter them all. He chooses the latter if there is danger of his becoming *jan*, and the former if he thinks that the adversary will soon be obliged to break up (*bryta*) some of his double points. The writer goes on to say: "*Jan* is when one has taken more of the opponent's men than he can re-enter, even if the *hus*-point or his six-point be not doubled (or, if men are still on the *hus*-point, the seven-point be open), the single man on the six-point or seven-point being, in that case, called the *janbricka*. He who becomes *jan* loses a double game, and the *partie* is ended." The description is not over clear, but we render it as exactly as possible. The account of the method of play continues, with explanations of *kronspel*, *upspel* and so on, the game ending, in the ordinary course of events, when all the winning player's pieces are brought around to his *husrum* (that is, when the *hemspel* is complete). After some important rules are given, we have the second sub-section (pp. 18-20), being a description of *verkehren utan junker* ("without junker"), in which the *junker* feature is done away with. It is styled an abnormal variety, in which there is more of chance then good play, and in which occurs the position of *sprängjan* ("bursting" or "break-

ing jan"), when the player, having his men captured and unable to re-enter them, does not become *junker*, but is allowed to "hit" his adversary's obstructing double points (*band*) as if they were blots. The compiler condemns this variety. The whole section on *verkehren* seems to be an inadequate account of the real Swedish backgammon, spoiled by features of the German *verkehren* gathered from a German manual. After this we have a description of the French *trictrac* (the name being applied alike to the game and the board), which, says the writer, is in many respects unlike *verkehren*, and in others like *toccategli*. The terminology is, as usual, largely French, with, in some instances, attempted translations, as *bak-jan* (the German "rückjan"), *stora jan* and *lilla jan* ("great jan," "little jan"), *janbräde* (the field or quarter of the board in which the player's *hus* lies), *marquera* (to "mark points"), and so forth. Immediately thereafter follows the account of *toccategli*, in which one of the terms is *schuster*, defined as a phase of the game in which the player is not yet prevented from forming in his opponent's board six double points. The men are placed at first on the first point to the right of one player and the left of the other. The backgammon division of the work ends with the variety called *schuster* which is declared to be properly "a game for women." The men are placed as in toccategli. We render the remaining few lines: "According to the throws, the men are moved from the *hus* into the next quarter of the board; if the player there make or secure each point with three extra men (*lösa brickor*) on the three last, all following each other, he wins two game-points, and the contest is over. If neither player obtain this position (called *schuster*), then it is permitted to move across into the adversary's board, and the game is won by him who, in the ordinary way, first 'bears' his men. No blots can be hit." This simple variety, as well as the two which precede it, evidently all owe their descriptions to some German manual, but the last-named, simple as it is, may still be of great age.

The next Swedish *académie* is entitled "Ny och fullständig svensk spelbok, eller grundlig anvisning till alla nu brukliga kortspel.... äfvensom schack, dam, brädspel och biljard" (Götheborg 1847), being a pretty close translation of the title-page of "Das königliche l'hombre." It treats only one backgammon game, namely, *verkehren i brädspel*" (pp. 298-309). This is the game described in the preceding work, but the section is better arranged and better written, and consists of twenty-two numbered paragraphs. We shall call attention to a few additional features and terms. The third paragraph tells us that in entering upon a game a previous agreement should be arrived at as to whether a player must have made five blots, before being permitted to form double points, or whether *fritt spel* shall be allowed, this "free play" meaning evidently that he can form double points at once, also as to whether each combatant shall be allowed to make only five successive double points (*fem band*), or whether he may form six; likewise as to whether the game shall be carried on with or without the *junker* feature; if the series of double points be limited to five, *junker* is excluded, otherwise the game usually includes the *junker*. The throw to decide the privilege of the first move is called *förkastet* (literally, "fore-cast," or "fore-throw.") Except in two exceptional situations only blots can be hit (paragraph ten), the exceptions being (paragraph fifteen) when the game is played without the *junker*, and yet one adversary does force the other into a *junker* position,

and (paragraph eighteen) when the *storm-jan* occurs in a *junker*-less game, this being an enforced series of moves making the opponent *junker*, when the latter can also capture men on the double (or doubled) points. *Uttagning* ("taking out") is used for "bearing" (*hemspel*). *Att vinna på sista brickan* ("to win on the last man") is when a player, after his adversary has borne all his men but one, captures that one and thereby gains the right, in order to hinder its advance when re-entered, to form a barrier of six successive double points, even if the pre-arrangement has been made to play with only five. The phrase here given is also used figuratively.

The latest and by far the most important treatise on games published in Sweden is the "Illustrerad spelbok en handleding i de flesta i Sverige och utlandet brukliga spel .... efter de bästa källor utarbetad af Tom Wilson" (Stockholm 1888), a handsome volume, the pseudonym "Tom Wilson" representing, it is asserted, a well known Stockholm journalist. The fact that both "domestic and foreign games" (*i Sverige och utlandet brukliga spel*) are described prevents a clear recognition of those which are actually practised by the Swedish people. We shall enumerate the backgammon games in their order, afterwards examining, in considerable detail, the most important and interesting one. The space occupied is pages 218-283: 1. *triktrak*, the well-known French variety, of which we have already said much. The section is apparently based on a careful study of the latest French authorities. The compiler boldly asserts, following French compilers, that it was known to the Greeks and Romans, and states that its present laws and methods were established during the reign of Louis XIVth. It has never been much played in Sweden, and is therefore often underestimated by uninformed persons. If compared with the only backgammon much practised among Swedes, it is difficult to say what would be the result. The French game is more complicated and therefore much more difficult; but simplicity is after all a merit, and just that characteristic, in addition to its variety of features and movements, makes the Swedish game particularly prominent and interesting, and preferred by many to its French rival. The board-points are variously called *pilar*, *fält*, *tungor*, *kilar*, *spetsar* (the last being literally "points"). The "coin de repos" or "ruhecke," is styled *huken* or *hvilovrån* (this compound meaning "rest-corner.") The French terms for the doublets ("ambesas," or "beset," "terne" or "tournes," "quaterne," etc.) are explained by the genuine old Swedish expressions (*tvåor* or *dusarn par*, *trallor*, *quartaner*, *sinkor många* etc.), the foreign terms thus being unnecessary. After further definitions follow a table of the possible combinations of the dice, a definition of *skolan* ("l'école"), an account of the various jans (their names in part translated) and other positions, a table of the values of the game-points, and finally a recorded *triktrak partie*, "according to the method first published in 1738." This is a game of seventeen throws (moves), each one carefully commented, with two variations, one running to the thirtieth throw, the other to the eighty-fifth — the whole being a most useful feature for the learner. But all the section is every way well done. 2. *Protokollstriktrak* ("trictrac à écrire"), which we have mentioned, the description being only a single page in length. 3. *Fullspel* ("jeu du plein"), a few lines. 4. *Toccategli* (or *tockadill*, French, "toc"), its origin attributed, as usual, to Italy; four pages are given to it. 5. *Puff*, (two pages) describing both the varieties *lång* and *konträr*, citing *bro* ("bridge") as the name of a barrier formed by

a series of united double points. 6. *Revertier*, meaning the German *verkehren*, to which four pages are devoted. 7. *Garanguet*, half a page briefly portraying this three-dice backgammon-game. 8. *Jacquet* (one page), telling of this French game and its variety, *Versailles-jacquet*. 9. *Tre-band* ("jeu de tourne-case"). The writer explains *tourne* as an old French appellation of the three-point on the dice, and gives a page of particulars of the game. 10. *Backgammon*, a page concerning this game, "a great favorite in England;" it was formerly in vogue in France, we are told, under the name of "toute-table," which is rendered into Swedish as *hela bordet*, *bordet rund* ("the whole board," "all round the board"); but the brief account of the English game is a correct, but totally inadequate one. 22. *Svenskt brädspel* ("Swedish table game," or "Swedish backgammon,") filling seventeen pages. This, by reason of its many interesting features, some novel to us, we shall summarize, giving likewise the Swedish text.[177]

[177] Vi gifva benämningen *Svenskt brädspel* åt det brädspel, hvilket är det i Sverige mest brukliga. Att denna form af brädspel uppfunnits i Sverige är ej entagligt; förmodligen är det ursprungligen samma spel som *Revertier* (*Verkehren*), hvilket på sina ställen spelas så, att det nästan alldeles öfverensstämmer med vårt svenska brädspel. Detta kan i alla händelser sägas utgöra *Revertier* med några mindre väsendtliga ändringar och tillägg. Brädspel eller, som man brukar kalla det, "spela bräde" torde höra till de i Sverige mest brukliga spel; det förekommer i alla landsändar, om än sällan bland allmogen, och man skulle derpå kunna tillämpa, hvad den engelske författaren Swift säger om engelsmännens brädspel backgammon, att "det bästa sättet att vinna aktning af presten i församlingen är att visa honom, att man kan spela bräde!" Enligt vårt förmenande intager bland brädspel svenskt brädspel främsta rummet. Skulle nagot brädspel kunna göra det samma rangen stridig, vore det möjligen triktrak, kanske äfven dess variant backgammon. Men egentligen kunna icke triktrak och svenskt brädspel jemföras med hvarandra, redan för det alldeles skiljaktiga spelsättets skull. Dessutom råder den stora skilnaden, att triktrak är ett ganska kompliceradt spel och derigenom särdeles svårt, så att hvad gäller en öfverblick af spelet, kan hända intet annat spel kan jemföras dermed; svenskt brädspel deremot utmärker sig just för sin enkelhet, men erbjuder på samma gång de intressantaste kombinationer och ger en skicklig spelare tillfälle till rätt djupa och fina beräkningar, hvilka egenskaper ju kunna sägas utgöra dygden hos ett spel. — *Spelets inrättning.* Till brädspel — vi använda för korthetens skull endast denna benämning — höra: ett brädspelbord, brickor och tärningar. *Brädspelsbordet* utgöres af ett bord, hvars yttre kan vara beskaffadt på olika sätt, t. ex., såsom ofta brukar vara förhållandet, försedt med en skifva, så att bordet kan användas till kortspelsbord o. s. v., men hvars inre består af en låda, eller hvad man nu vill kalla det, som utgör sjelfva brädet eller spelbordet.

Spelbordet, till sin form rektangulärt, är klädt, vanligtvis med grönt kläde. I bordets midt, på hvardera långsidan, förekommer en, dock icke öfver hela bordet gående, utan endast några tum utskjutande skiljevägg, hvarigenom bordet delas i 4 *bräden* eller *fällt*, 2 på hvardera sidan. Utefter bordets båda långsidor forekomma sammanlagdt 24 *kilar* (kallas äfven *pilar*, *fällt*, *tungor*) 12 på hvardera långsidan, 6 i hvart bräde, af annan färg än bordets beklädnade. Kilarne äro omvexland ljusa (hvita, gula) och mörka (svarta, röda) till färgen, hvar annan kil ljus, hvar annan mörk, och stående så, att mot ljus kil på ena sidan svarar mörk kil på motsatt sida. Kilarne i figuren 1 [22] äro numrerade endast för att underlätta notationen af spelet; i verkligheten förekommer icke denna numrering. Kilarne 1-6, 7-12 utgöra de två brädena eller fälten på hvardera sidan, alltså sammanlagdt fyra bräden. Någon särskildt benämning på de två brädena på hvar sida, såsom i triktrak, förekommer icke. — *Brickorna* äro sammanlagdt 30 till antalet, nemligen 15 ljusa, som innehafvas af den ene spelaren, 15 mörka, med hvilka den andre spelar. — *Tärningarne* äro 2 till antalet och användas gemensamt af de båda spelarne. Inga andra tillbehör forekomma, de i så många brädspel brukliga bägarne användas icke. Speltärningar utgöras, såsom bekant, af kuber, hvilka på hvar och en af de sex ytorna bära något af numren 1-6, fördelade så, att de nummer, hvilka stå midt emot hvarandra, till sammans utgöra talet 7. På sidan midt emot sexan står alltså en etta, midt emot femman en tvåa o. s. v. Numren på tärningarne bruka kallas *ögon*. Olika ögon på båda tärningarne (t. ex. 5-2) kallas *enkelt kast*, lika ögon (t. ex. 6-6) kallas *alla*. De båda tärningarne gifva till sammans anledning till 36 kombinationer, hvilka anföras här, emedan det är till nytta att lära känna dem. Sju kan komma upp på 6 olika

The author's name for this variety is given to it because it is the most practised in Sweden. Probably, he thinks, it was originally identical with "revertier" ("verkehren"), but has undergone some, perhaps unimportant changes, and has added some new features. It is the best-known of all Sweden's games of any kind, and is played in every quarter of the country, even in the rural regions, though not much by the lower or uneducated

sätt, alltså 6 kombinationer. Räknar man alla de olika kast, som kunna göras med 2 tärningar, finnas egentligen endast 21 kombinationer, nemligen: 6 och 1, 6 och 2, 6 och 3, 6 och 4, 6 och 5, 6 och 6; 5 och 1, 5 och 2, 5 och 3, 5 och 4, 5 och 5; 4 och 1, 4 och 2, 4 och 3, 4 och 4; 3 och 1, 3 och 2, 3 och 3; 2 och 1, 2 och 2; 1 och 1. Dessa äro de 21 kast, som kallas *verkliga* eller *sensibla*, men till dessa 21 kombinationer måste man lägga 15 andra, kallade *insensibla*, hvilkas tillvaro är lätt att bevisa. Det kan tyckas, som om 6 och 1 och 1 och 6 borde vara

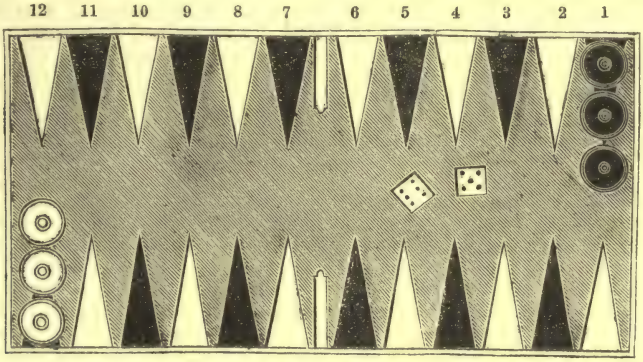


Fig. 22.

samma sak. Men denna samma sak frambringas på två sätt och bör räknas 2 ganger; ty emedan hvarje tärning har en 1 och en 6, fins det två 1 och två 6, och den tärning, som ena gången kom upp med 1, kan nästa gång komma upp med 6; tarningen som ena gången kom upp med 6, kan sedan komma upp med 1. Detta skulle göra ännu 21 kombinationer, så vida man icke fränräknade de allorna, hvilka icke kunna komma upp mer än en gång. Foljande tabell utvisar de olika numren och deras kombinationer:

Ögon på de bada tärningarne.	Antal sätt att komma upp.	Antal kombinationer.
12	1	1
11	2	2
10	3	3
9	4	4
8	5	5
7	6	6
6	5	5
5	4	4
4	3	3
3	2	2
2	1	1
		36

Efter som 7 har de flesta kombinationerna, bör detta ögonantal oftast komma upp, hvartill man bör taga hänsyn. De olika tärningskasten ha erhållit följande namn: Dubbla sexan (6-6) kallas *sexor mång*; dubbla femman (5-5) kallas *sinkor (cinkor) mång*; dubbla fyran (4-4) kallas *qvartaner;* dubbla trean (3-3) kallas *trallor;* dubbla tvåan (2-2) kallas *dusarne par;* dubbla ettan (1-1) kallas *essen par*; sex och fem (6-5) kallas *sextiofem* (sex till fem, sex och fem); sex och fyra (6-4) kallas *sextiofyra* (sex till fyra, sex och fyra); sex och tre (6-3) kallas *sextiotre*

classes. According to the writer it takes the foremost place among the varieties of backgammon, only to be compared possibly with *triktrak;* and he then proceeds to describe their diverse features. The board used for *brädspel* — the name is used for brevity's sake — is usually provided with a slide (*skifva*), so that it can be used as a card-table etc., the inner part being the *brädspelsbord* proper. With the aid of an illustration, the board, its

(sex till tre, sex och tre); sex och två (6-2) kallas *sextiotvå* (sex till två, sex och två); sex och ett (6-1) kallas *sex ess*; fem och fyra (4-5) kallas *sinka fyra;* fem och tre (5-3) kallas *sinka tre*; fem och två (5-2) kallas *sinka dus*; fem och ett (5-1) kallas *sinka ess;* fyra och tre (4-3) kallas *qvart tre;* fyra och två (4-2) kallas *qvart dus*; fyra och ett (4-1) kallas *qvart ess*. tre och två (3-2) kallas *troja dus*; tre och ett (3-1) kallas *tress ess*; två och ett (2-1) kallas *dus ess*. Den högre tärningen i ett kast nämnes alltid först. *Spelsättet.* Hvardera spelaren har, såsom redan nämnts, 15 brickor, den ene de ljusa, den andre de mörka. Man staplar upp sina brickor i *motspelarens venstra hörn*, i 3 högar, 5 brickor i hvardera högen, såsom fig. 1 [22] utvisar. Hvardera spelaren har alltså sina brickor på kilen 1, enligt figuren, på motspelarens sida. Platsen, der man har sina brickor i spelets början, kilen 1, kallas *hus* (*hem*). Att gå ut med brickor från denna plats kallas att *gå från hus* (*hemifrån*). Spelets sjelfva grundval är den, att man slår med tärningarne och tager för kastet, d. v. s. att så många ögon, som man får upp på tärningarne, så många kilar får man flytta en eller två eller, när man slår alla (se derom längre ned), flera brickor. Med andra ord, man kan gå antingen med endast *en* bricka för hela kastet, d. v. s. för båda tärningarnes ögon sammanräknade, eller med *två* brickor, en för hvardera tärningen o. s. v. Man slår, med hvar sin tärning, om hvem som skall börja, hvilket i allmänhet är den, som slår de lägsta ögonen. När en bricka flyttas, inberäknas icke kilen, hvarpå den står: *man räknar från kilen näst efter den, hvarpå brickan står.* Detta gäller, vare sig brickan skall flyttas från hus eller från någon annan plats, dit den redan gått. T. ex., om man i första kastet slår troja dus (3-2), kan man antingen gå med *en* bricka hemifrån, hvilken då flyttas fem kilar (3 + 2), alltså kommer att stå på pilen 6; eller också flyttar man två brickor, en för trean, en för tvåan; dessa brickor komma att stå, den förstnämnda på kilen 4, den andra på kilen 3. Det brukar för nybörjare vara förenadt med svårighet att flytta brickorna med tillbörlig snabbhet. Man bör derför ihågkomma, emedan det underlättar saken, att för jemna ögon på de båda tärningarne till sammans flyttas en bricka till en kil af lika färg, för udda ögon till en pil af annan färg.

Allor tagas dubbelt. T. ex., om man slår dusarne par (2-2), tar man icke endast för 4 ögon, utan för två gånger 4 ögon = 8 ögon. Man kan då, på samma sätt som nämnts vid enkelt kast, antingen gå med *en* bricka från hus, hvilken då kommer att stå på pilen 9, eller också kan man gå med *två* brickor från hus, då man med den ena brickan tar för tre af de fyra tvåorna, med den andra för den fjerde tvåan; den förstnämnda brickan kommer på kilen 7, den andra på kilen 3. (Taga för 2 tvåor med hvardera brickan, då 2 brickor komme på samma kil, nemligen kilen 5, kan man icke, emedan man ännu icke får ha mera än en bricka på en och samma kil, hvarom mera längre ned. Ofvanstående exempel ega sin tillämplighet, när man går med brickor från hus. Hade man redan brickor ute, stode t. ex. med en bricka på kilen 5, en på kilen 6, och sloge dus ess (2-1), hade man att välja på: *a.* att gå från hus med 1 bricka, som då komme på 4; *b.* att gå från hus med 2 brickor, den ena till 3, den andra till 2; *c.* att gå med 1 af de brickor man har ute, vare sig med brickan på 5 till 8, eller med brickan på 6 till 9; *d.* att gå med båda brickorna man har ute, t. ex. med brickan på 6 till 8, brickan på 5 till 6. Hade man flera brickor ute, t. ex. en på hvardera af kilarne, 5, 6, 7, 8, och sloge en alla, t. ex. essen par (1-1), och man icke ville gå med någon bricka från hus, utan föredroge att flytta dem man redan hade ute, kunde man med 1 bricka taga för alla ögonen, t. ex. med 5 till 9 eller 6 till 10 o. s. v.; men man kunde äfven taga med 4 brickor, nemligen 8 till 9, 7 till 8, 6 till 7, 5 till 6. Har man brickor ute och gör ett kast tilräckligt högt att nå så långt, kan man med dessa brickor gå öfver på motsatt sida af bordet, den sida, der man sjelf sitter. T. ex., om man har brickor på 10 och 11 och slår 6-4, kan man, om man ej vill gå från hus, flytta dessa båda brickor, t. ex. 15 till kilen 4 på motsatt sida, 11 till kilen 3. Brickornas gångsätt är alltså: från höger till venster, så länge man har dem på motspelarens sida, sedan, då man kommit öfver på sin egen sida, från venster till höger. Spelets uppgift är att föra brickorna rundt hela bordet, tills man slutligen *spelar hem* dem till den plats, hvarifrån man utgick. Den som först lyckas spela hem eller som det äfven kallas *uttaga* alla sina brickor, vinner partiet. Man kan likväl vinna äfven på annat satt, hvarom mera längre ned. Nyss gifna exempel på brickornas flyttning äro icke afsedda att utgöra något råd, hur man i början af ett parti *bäst* skall flytta dem; de upplysa

points, the men and the dice with their combinations, and the names given to the points and doublets are fully treated. There are twenty-one real (*verkliga*) or perceptible (*sensibla*) dice-combinations (six-one, six-two, six-three, six-four, six-five, six-six, five-one, five-two and so on), and fifteen imperceptible (*insensibla*), which are, not enumerating the doublets, one-six, one-five, one-four, one-three, one-two, two-six, two-five and so forth —

endast om de olika sätt, hvarpå man kan och får taga för kasten. En hufvud regel dervid är, såsom framgår af öfvanstående, att man måste taga just för de ögon, som komma upp på hvardera tärningen, med andra ord, att man icke får sönderdela kastet. Slår man t. ex. troja dus (3-2) och flyttar 2 brickor, måste man taga en 3 med ena brickan, en 2 med den andra, men får icke taga t. ex. för 1 med den ena brickan, för 4 med den andra. Att taga med *en* bricka för hela kastet benämnes i det efterföljande att *taga fullt med en*. *Man eger icke rättighet att taga för ett kast så, att man träffar motspelarens hus*, när der fins mera än *en* bricka. Detta innebär så väl, att man icke får sätta en bricka i motspelarens hus, som äfven, att man icke får träffa det under vägen. Att "träffa" vill här säga att nå just dit med ögonen på den ena eller andra tärningen (det samma som i triktrak kallas att *hvila sig*). T. ex., om jag står på 11 och slår dusarne par (2-2), kan jag icke för detta kast med brickan på 11 gå öfver till min egen sida, ty under vägen träffar jag med en tvåa motspelarens hus, jag slår ned (hvilar mig) just der. Deremot finnes intet hinder att för en 3 gå med brickan på 11 öfver till mottsat sida, till kilen 2, ty då *passerade* jag endast motspelarens hus, *ginge öfver* det, men träffade det icke. Finnes endast *en* bricka i motspelarens hus, utgör den intet hinder, ty då slår jag den liksom andra brickor, hvilken sak förklaras längre ned. (Har motspelaren under hemspel fått en bricka i hus, får man icke slå den). En följd af att man icke får träffa motspelarens hus är, att man i början af partiet icke vid alla kast kan taga för båda tärningarne. T. ex. om man i första kastet slår sexor all (6-6), kan man taga endast för den ena sexan, med en bricka från hus till 7. Två brickor får man icke ställa på en och samma kil förr, än man nått pilen 12 (se längre ned om *huken*), och ta fullt med en för detta kast kan man icke heller, ty då träffade man motspelarens hus. Det kan förekomma, att man till och med alls icke kan taga för ett kast. T. ex. om man i första kastet slagit sinka ess (5-1) och från hus tagit fullt med en till 7 och man i nästa kast får sexor all (6-6), så kan man icke flytta någon bricka; ty brickan, som redan är ute, träffade motspelarens hus, och gå från hus med någon bricka kan man icke, emedan kilen 7 redan är upptagen af den i första kastet flyttade brickan, och sätta två brickor der får man icke. Under spelet kunna flera liknande fall inträffa, nemligen att man icke kan taga för kastet, hvilket icke har någon annan påföljd, än att motspelaren slår som vanligt och man sjelf slår om, när man är i tur. Det är regel, *att man alltid måste taga för sitt kast, när någon möjlighet gifves*. Man brukar äfven följa den regeln, att när man icke, vare sig med en eller två brickor, kan taga för hela kastet, men väl med en bricka för *antingen* den ena eller den andra tärningen, tager man för de högsta ögonen. T. ex. om man slår sinka fyra (5-4) och icke kan taga både femman och fyran, men väl *endera*, så tar man för femman.

Huken. Kilen 12 kallas huk. Hvardera spelaren har sin huk i högra hörnet på samma sida af bordet, der han börjar spela. Kilen 1 på denna sida är hans hus, kilen 12 hans huk. Alltså behöfver man i första kastet 11 ögon för att med en bricka nå från hus till huk. Huken är af stor betydelse, ty den utgör på den sida af bordet, der man börjar spela, den enda kil (huset naturligtvis undantaget), der man har rättighet att sätta mera än 1 bricka eller, som det kallas, göra band.

Band. När man har mera än 1 bricka på en och samma kil, kallas detta ett *band*. Motsatsen till band, nemligen en enda bricka på en kil, kallas *blotta*. *Binda* är att göra band, med andra ord, att på en kil, der man förut har en blotta, sätta en eller flera brickor. *Bryta band* är att taga bort en eller flera brickor från en kil, så att ett band förvandlas till en blotta. Banden äro af största vigt, emedan man icke kan *slå* dem (undantagandes i det fall, som längre med omnämnes). *Slå*. Man slår en bricka, då man enligt tärningskastet med en af sina brickor träffar en af motspelarens blottor. T. ex., om motspelaren har en blotta på kilen 3 (på den sida, der han börjar spela) och jag står med en bricka på 11 (på den sida, der jag börjar spela), träffar jag för 4 ögon på tärningarne denna hans blotta. Slår jag den, skall motspelaren taga bort den ur bordet och *får icke flytta några andra brickor förr, än han slagit in sig igen*. *Slå in* (spela in) en bricka kan man göra *endast i brädet (fältet), der man har sitt hus*, alltså på någon af pilarne 1-6. Det får ske endast på en ledig kil, hvarmed här förstås *en kil, der man icke sjelf har någon bricka, vare sig band eller blotta, och motspelaren icke något band*. (Att man, då man skall slå in sig och motspelarens band stå i vägen,

this class differing because the higher number must be announced and played (!) first. We have already reported the interesting names bestowed upon the dice-combinations (p. 316). The method of play (*spelsättet*) is, before beginning, to place the fifteen men in three piles, each player's in his adversary's left-hand corner point. To move the men from their home-point is called to *gå* [go] *från hus* (*hemifrån*). The two points thrown may be

så att ingen annan plats finnes ledig, eger att slå dem, se derom längre ned). När man skal slå in sig, måste man på *endera* tärningen få det erforderliga ögonantalet, men får icke slå ihop ögonen på de båda tärningarne. T. ex., om man skall slå in sig på kilen 4, måste man på endera tärningen få en fyra; får man en trea på den ena tärningen och en etta på den andra, får man icke hopräkna ögonen. *Har motspelaren en blotta på kilen, anses den såsom ledig.* Man slår då in sig på så sätt man i sin tur slår denna blotta och ställer sig der den stod. Då man slår in en bricka, räknas hörnkilen eller huset för 1, den derpå följande kilen för 2, o. s. v. T. ex, om kilen 3 är ledig, behöfver man 3 ögon för att slå in sig. När motspelaren börjat sitt hemspel och spelat hem en bricka, betraktas den icke som en blotta och blir icke slagen. Den bricka, hvarmed jag för mitt kast når dit, till hans hus, sätter jag icke der, utan på listen bredvid. Den betraktas likväl såsom stående på kilen, som utgör hans hus, och flyttas sedan i enlighet dermed. Deremot, när under utspelet en enda bricka qvarstår i hus, blir den slagen liksom en vanlig blotta. *Man får icke slå band, endast blottor.* (Ett undantag från denna regel förekommer, såsom nyss nämnts). Man eger rättighet att slå flera blottor för ett och samma kast, och att göra detta vare sig med en eller flera af sina egna brickor. T. ex., om jag står på 10 (på den sida, der jag börjar), motspelaren har en blotta på 2 (på den sida der han börjar) och en på 5 (samma sida) och jag slår qvart tre (4-3), så kan jag med min bricka på 10 slå honom både på 2 och 5. Har motspelaren blottor stående så, som nyss nämnts, jag sjelf en bricka på 11, en på 10 och jag slår sextiofyra (6-4), kan jag slå honom både på 5 och 2. För allor kan jag helt naturligt slå flera blottor, efter som allorna tagas dubbelt. *Det är intet tvång att slå.* Ofvanstående exempel äro afsedda endast att upplysa om sättet att slå, icke hur man *bäst* bör göra det. Det är lätt att inse, af hvilken vigt banden måste vara, på den grund att man icke får slå dem. Att göra band är hvad man främst söker uppnå. *Man eger icke rättighet att ha fler än 5 band omedelbart efter (bredvid) hvarandra,* utom i ett fall, som omnämnes längre ned. Ehuru man på den sida, der man börjar spela, icke eger att göra band förr än i huken, utgör detta likväl intet hinder för, att man kan gå öfver till motsatt sida och göra band der, *innan man ännu har band i huken, t. o. m. innan man ännu satt någon bricka i huken.* Icke heller gäller någon inskränkning så till vida, att man först skall ha gått från hus med något visst antal brickor, innan man får börja göra band. Banden på pilarne 6 och 7 kallas *jernbanden, (fars- och morsbanden*), bandet på 2 *janbandet.* Man har rättighet att göra band bestående af mera an 2 brickor, man kan dertill taga 3, 4, o. s. v., hur många man behagar. Band bestående af fler än 2 brickor benämnas ofta *polacker* (*öfverband*). I band bestående af 2 brickor ställes den ena brickan framför den andra på samma kil; i band med 3 brickor sättes den ena brickan midt öfver de andra; i band med 4 brickor, två och två brickor på hvarandra o. s. v. Spelets uppgift är, såsom förut namnts, att föra brickorna rundt alla brädena, tills man slutligen får dem på samma plats, hvarifrån man utgick, hvilket kallas *hemspel.* Den som först lyckas spela hem alla sina brickor, vinner enkelt parti. Man kan med alla brickorna i sista brädet vinna äfven på annat sätt, än genom hemspel. Lyckas man placera 3 brickor på hvardera af de 5 sista kilarne (8-12), kallas detta *enkelt kronspel,* 5 brickor på hvar och en af de tre sista kilarne (10-12) kallas *dubbelt kronspel.* Lyckas man få 7 brickor på den sista kilen (12), 5 på den näst sista (11) och 3 på kilen dernast (10), har man *trappspel.* Får man alla brickorna på sista kilen (12), kallas detta *uppspel,* hvilket sistnämnda högst sällan förekommer. Man bör, då partiet nått så långt, *försöka* vinna det genom något af nyssnämnda spel, emedan de ofta bruka betalas högre än hemspel. Åtminstone uppspel brukar betalas dubbelt. Lyckas man icke göra något af de nämnda spelen, spelar man hem brickorna. *Man får icke börja dermed förr, än man kommit med alla brickorna i sitt sista bräde.*

Vid hemspelet tager man, när det låter sig göra, på vanligt sätt för kasten. T. ex., för en 6 går man hem med en bricka från kilen 7, för en 1 gar man hem med en bricka fran kilen 11, o. s. v. med alla andra kast. Slår man allor, kan man gå hem med 4 brickor på en gång. Har man redan uttagit de längst bort stående brickorna och slår höga kast, tager man de brickor, som stå närmast de kilar, hvarifrån man enligt kastet skulle taga. T. ex., slår man sexor, men redan spelat hem brickorna på 7, tar man i stället brickorna

played each for itself, or may be combined — in other words one man may be moved (according to the sum of the two points), or two men. Doublets are counted doubly. If the dice permit, the player may move men into his own side of the board whenever he will. The march of the men is thus from right to left so long as they are on the opponent's side of the board, afterwards from left to right. The object of the game is to bring them all

på 8, har man icke heller der några, tar man brickorna på 9 o. s. v. Man är icke skyldig att för hvarje kast spela hem eller, såsom det också kallas, taga ut 2 brickor på en gång. Kan man enligt kastet flytta en bricka på vanligt sätt från en kil till en annan, är äfven detta tillåtet. T. ex., om man slår 6-5 och har ett band på kilen 7, så kan man för sexan spela hem en bricka och för femman flytta den andra till hörnet, kilen 12. Icke heller är det regel, att man vid hemspelet skall börja med de längst bort stående brickorna, så vida man icke får de höga kast, som motsvara dem. Slår jag t. ex essen par (1-1), kan jag spela hem 4 brickor från kilen 12, änskönt de längre bort stående banden ännu icke äro hemspelade. Men slår man höga kast, som motsvara de längst bort stående banden, måste man äfven spela hem dem; t. ex. slår man sexor all (6-6) och har 3 brickor på kilen 7, 2 på kilen 8, måste man spela hem alla 3 brickorna från kilen 7 och en från kilen 8. Har man spelat hem alla sina brickor och motspelaren ännu har någon bricka slagen, är han *munk*. Man bör under hemspelet akta sig att komma efter med blottor; ty *har man spelat hem alla brickor utom en, och motspelaren slår den, eger han rättighet att sätta hur många band han behagar*. Spelet kan afslutas, innan man hinner till hemspel, nemligen när någon af de båda spelarne blir *jan* eller *sprängjan*. *Jan blir man, om man får flera brickor slagna, än det fins platser att komma in på i första brädet* (1-6). T. ex., om jag redan har 5 blottor i mitt första bräde, der jag skall spela in de slagna brickorna, och jag så får 2 brickor slagna, så har jag plats för endast en af dem och är då jan. Se nedanstående figur 2 [23]. Den som spelar med svarta brickor och som vi vilja kalla A, är här nära att bli

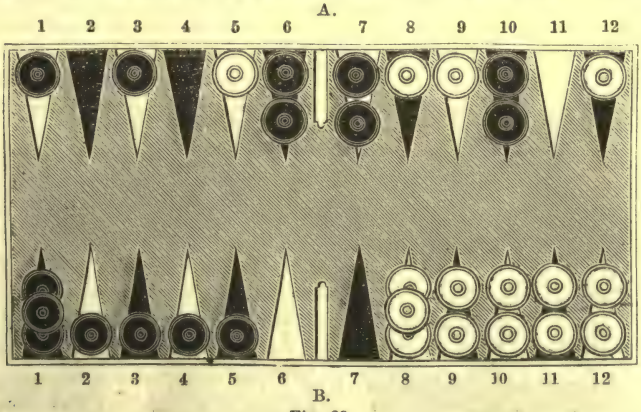


Fig. 23.

jan. Det behöfves endast, att motspelaren, B, kastar essen par, så slår han med sin bricka på 8 motspelarens blottor på 10 och 12. Som A har plats endast för en bricka, nemligen på kilen 6, är han jan. B vinner då dubbelt parti.

Får man en eller flera blottor slagna och icke har någon ledig kil att slå in sig på, derför att kilarne i brädet, der detta skall ske, äro *upptagna dels af ens egna blottor, dels af motspelarens band, eger man rättighet att slå dem*. Om då motspelaren icke har någon ledig plats att spela in sina slagna brickor på, är han *sprängjan*. En jemförelse mellan *jan* och *sprängjan* blir alltså den: *jan* blir man, om hela brädet, der man skall slå in sig redan är upptaget af ens egna blottor och man får en bricka slagen, eller, när *icke alla* kilar ännu äro upptagna, om man får flera brickor slagna, än det fins platser for; t. ex. om i brädet, der jag skall slå in mig, stå fem mig tillhöriga blottor och jag får två brickor slagna. *Sprängjan* blir man, om man har band stående i brädet, der motspelaren skall slå in sig, och de öfriga kilarne i brädet upptagas af motspelarens blottor; om jag då slår en eller flera brickor för motspelaren,

around the board, until the player has been enabled to "play" them "home" to the point where they originally stood. They are generally placed on their starting-point (when "borne" or "thrown off"), but this final stage of the game is likewise called to *uttaga* ("take out") or *uttagning* ("taking out"). To move only one piece at a throw (instead of two) is styled to *taga fullt med en* ("take fully with one.") A man can neither be moved to a point covered by two of the adversary's men, nor played in such way that he would hit it if it were a blot. No double points can be formed until the player has reached the eleventh point from his starting-point, that is until he has arrived at the *huk* ("coin de repos"); to illustrate this: supposing a player has thrown five-ace at his first cast, and then plays one man six points (to the point adjoining the bar); if he throw, at his next cast, double sixes he is prohibited from moving, for if he play his sixes from the *hus* they will reach the man previously moved, forming a double point, which is not yet allowed, and if he move the man already played six points he would strike the adversary's *hus*. But a player may form a double point in his own *huk* ("coin de repos"), the twelfth point from his *hus*, and the only point on the adversary's board on which he can place two men. A double point cannot be hit, or captured, except in a single case to be noted

måste han for att komma in slå ett eller flera af mina band. Har jag icke någon plats att spela in dessa slagna brickor på, är jag sprängjan. Af öfvanstående framgår, att jag i ett fall eger slå motspelarens band, nemligen när jag skall spela in slagna brickor och det icke finnes någon ledig plats. Finnes deremot någon ledig kil, alltså en tom kil eller en kil, der motspelaren har en blotta, skall jag slå in mig der och eger icke rättighet att slå motspelarens band. I nedanstående figur [24] är A sprängjan. Han har slagit två blottor for B. Ingen plats finnes för B att komma

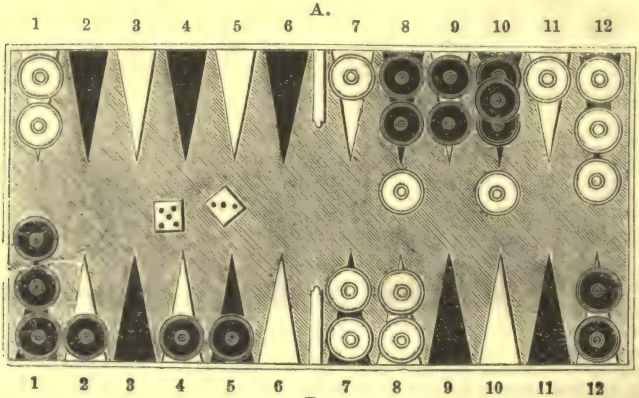


Fig. 24.

in på. B slår sinka tre (5-3), såsom tärningarne utvisa; han slår A's band på kilarne 3 och 5. A får alltså *fem* brickor slagna, men har i brädet, der han skall slå in sig (kilarne 1-6 på motsatt sida), endast *två* platser att komma in på, nemligen kilarne 3 och 6, alltså är A sprängjan. Man brukar följa den regeln, att om den ene spelaren ser, att den andre lätt bör vinna jan, kan den förstnämnde, innan han ännu gjort band i sitt 3:e bräde, gifva spelet förloradt och tappar då endast enkelt parti. Den som förlorar, brukar få börja i nästa parti. — This includes the whole section of the "Illustrerad Spelbok" relating to the peculiar *Svenskt brädspel*, or the oldest and most characteristic and general form of backgammon known to Sweden, the careful study of which, for historical reasons is so greatly to be commended. That no dice-box is used, in playing it, should be an additional testimony to its great age.

hereafter. Captured men are to be re-entered in that quarter of the board in which the owner of the captured man, or men, began to play. A captured man must be entered, in accordance with the dice-point thrown, only upon a vacant point, or upon a point on which the player has no man already, or upon one on which the opponent has not a double point. But there is, as we shall see, an exception to this last condition. The player re-entering a man must do so on a point indicated by the number on one of his dice, but cannot combine the dice-numbers for this purpose. Thus, casting three-one, he must enter upon the third or first point, but not on the fourth. Blots of the enemy, in re-entering men, are hit as in other portions of the board by removing the enemy's man from the board and placing the re-entering man in its place. In re-entering, the corner point or *hus* is reckoned as point one, the next as point two, and so on. A man of the opponent having been played wholly around and placed on his *hus*-point (that is, virtually "thrown off") cannot be hit: if by chance my throw carries one of my men to that point on my way around, I must place it on the side or margin of the board next to the point; in moving my man again, however, I reckon the board-points as if it really stood on the adversary's *hus*-point. On the other hand when, in throwing off [*under utspelet*], a single man has been left standing in the opponent's *hus* it may be hit like any other blot. Each player may hit more than one blot at the same throw, and with the same man.

Neither player has the right to form more than five successive double-points, except in a case hereafter to be indicated. Although a player cannot make a double point on the side of the table in which he begins to play until he reaches the last (or twelfth point), this does not prevent his forming such points as soon as he has crossed over into his own table, even if he has not had a single man in the opposite table's twelfth point (*huken*). As we have stated, double points on the two points adjoining the central bar are called *jernbanden* (doubtless on account of the resistance they afford to the opponent's advance) or *fars- och morsbanden*. A secured point on the second point (counting from the left) in one's board is named the *janband*. In secured points having two men they must be placed beside each other (one before the other) on the point; if a third man be added, it must stand upon the others (half resting on each of the men under it); if a fourth be placed on the point, they should rest in twos, one above the other. Having reached the final quarter of the table the game may be won: 1. by throwing off one's men before the adversary has borne his; 2. by securing one of the positions known as *enkelt kronspel* and *dobbelt kronspel*, already described; 3. by either of the positions styled *trappspel* or *uppspel*, likewise previously mentioned. If the succesful player cannot end the game in any of these ways, then he should close it by bearing the men (*hemspel*). This process cannot be begun until all the men have reached the last quarter of the board. The throwing off is carried on exactly as in English backgammon, except that the men borne may be placed either outside the board or piled on the *hus*. It is permitted either to throw off the men, or to move them further up towards the final point. As we have observed, if a player has thrown off all his men, and his adversary still has some men not yet re-entered (*ännu har någon bricka slagen*), the latter is said to be *munk* ("monk"). If a player has borne all his men but one and that should be hit, the adversary has the privilege of barring that last man's advance by

a series of as many adjoining double points as he may choose to form, in other words he is no longer restricted to five consecutive ones. The game can also be decided, before all the men of the one player or the other player reach the final or throwing-off board, by *jan* or *sprängjan*. The former occurs when a player has more men captured ("hit") than there are places in the first quarter (the *hus*-quarter) of the board, on which to re-enter them. For instance, if I have already five blots in my first quarter, where the men must be re-entered, and my adversary captures two men, then I can enter only one of them and am *jan*, and my opponent wins a double game. The other position is more complicated. If one has one or more men hit and there is no vacant point on which to enter them, because all the points in the re-entering quarter are occupied either by his own blots or by the double points of his adversary—if then, the adversary is unable to re-enter the men thus captured, he becomes *sprängjan*. If a player see that he is threatened with becoming jan he may resign, and thus loses only a simple *partie*. It is customary that the player losing a game has the first throw in the following one. The general advice to players, as to the proper style of conducting their game (forming the last three pages of the account in the "Illustrerad spelbok"), we omit, both in this summary and in the original text, since nothing therein contained throws any additional light on the character of this interesting variety of backgammon.

From internal evidence it seems fair to conclude that this game, existing so long, and so universally played, in a land like Sweden, comparatively isolated in the remote Scandinavian peninsula, may well be considered as representing the most common variety of the mediæval game of tables (*tafl* as it was first called in the North, or, in early Swedish, *tafvel*). Of course such features as the two *jans* may have crept in at a later period, just as we have seen, in our day, modifications introduced into popular modern card-games like "euchre," which have soon grown to be generally accepted. Another thing seems not improbable, namely, that between the earliest date of backgammon in Sweden and that of backgammon in Iceland no very great period could have elapsed. If this be the case a careful study of the two varieties would doubtless yield some notable results as regards the development of games. In both countries the original European name gave place to another, because the Latin word "tabula" ("tabulæ") got to be more particularly applied to chess or to table-games in general. In Iceland the foreign (Latin or French) name of the most striking side of the die was given to the game. We know not how long the appellation *brädespel* has been in use in Sweden as a general name for backgammon; otherwise we might say that the Swedes translated "tables" into their own tongue, since *brädespel* means simply, "table-game." But, again, *bräde* may be itself a foreign term borrowed from the Germanic dialects south of Scandinavia. Here, again, we have an instance of how much researches of this kind are hampered by the lack of reasonably complete lexicological works, based, like the great Oxford English Dictionary, on historical principles, and presenting the forms of words at different stages of their growth—even of words which have now disappeared—with numerous examples of their use. More intimate acquaintance, too, with Norway is especially desirable in prosecuting our northern investigations. That land was the mother-country of the Icelanders; there was a close and continuous intercourse between the mother

and the daughter until some time after the union of Norway with Denmark (after 1400), by which event Denmark obtained control of the Arctic island. It would, therefore, be interesting to know something of the early history of Norwegian backgammon, especially during the saga period and the centuries which immediately followed, as well as to learn the exact character of the most popular form of the game in that country at the present day, particularly in the northern and more remote towns and villages. Iceland may have received the game from Germany or Sweden, or even from France by the way of Norway. That it came by the way of England, as chess did, seems to be excluded by the differing technical terms of the game, while the intercourse with Denmark was too slight, in the XIIth-XIVth centuries, to favor the belief that the game made its way to Iceland from that country. Two geographical points must be considered when studying this subject. The first is that the limits of Sweden were, until the XVIIth century, much more restricted than now, the whole southern portion, previous to that date, belonging to Denmark. The second is that Scotland was until 1603 an independent kingdom, having a certain amount of intercourse with France, and thus might have been the medium, if not directly then through Shetland and the Orkneys, for the introduction of foreign novelties into Iceland. Perhaps we shall be obliged to look at this latter fact, when we consider more closely the matter of *hnefatafl*, its character and origin.

At the end of the description of the Swedish *brädspel* which we have reproduced, but not forming a separate section of the "Spelbok," we find a brief account of a minor variety of backgammon styled *sex ess*. This is the English *sice-ace* (see our p. 300), which, singularly enough, still survives in Sweden, after it has been long disused and forgotten in England. As the sketch we have given from the "Compleat Gamester" fails to describe it properly we shall translate the notice of it ("Spelbok," pp. 281-3). It will be found afterwards, that besides the interesting fact of its survival in an unexpected place, we have probably ascertained another fact of even greater importance. The writer says: "On the usual backgammon-board is played a game which has received the name of 'sice-ace.' It is quite a simple game, the issue of which does not at all depend on skill or prudent foresight, but only on the throws of the dice. It is played by two players, with six men on each side, and two dice used in common. The point of the game is to get rid of one's men, the first one accomplishing that being the winner. The pips of the die are reckoned as follows: Casting ace, a piece (or man) is turned over to the adversary; casting six, a piece is laid aside; casting five, a man is placed in the 'deuce' (*dusen*), which ordinarily has its place between the two players [that is, as seems probable, an indicated space, so called, on the board between the points]; casting deuce, a piece is taken from the 'deuce' (*tager man in dusen*); the pips four and three are not regarded. Each dice-point must be taken separately and uncombined. For instance, if my throw be five-ace, I am not allowed to combine the two points and play them as a six, but I must regard them as a five and an ace, each to be played separately. Doublets are counted thus: if I cast double sixes, I lay aside two men; if double ace I give my opponent two men; if double fives, I place two men in the 'deuce;' if double deuces, I take two men from the "deuce" (on condition, naturally, that there be so many therein), in case the game is played on the principle that only one man

shall be taken from the 'deuce' for every deuce-point cast, which is not so common a method as that which requires that on throwing a two all the men in the 'deuce' shall be removed. Even this game, however meaningless it may appear, presents some variety dependent on the different ways of availing one's self of the five and the deuce, when they turn up together. For example, if several men are in the 'deuce,' and I turn up five-deuce, it makes a great difference, whether I shall reckon the five first, therefore placing a man in the 'deuce' and afterwards, for the deuce, take away all the men in the 'deuce' (if that mode of play be adopted), even the man just placed therein, for the five I have cast, which is really the same as if I had counted nothing at all for the five; or whether I count the deuce first, therefore taking away (*ta in hela dusen*) the men in the deuce, and afterwards putting in a man for the five. In the latter case it will be seen that I have got rid of a man. The best play, therefore would seem to be, when a deuce is thrown, to take up the whole 'deuce,' except one man, which is to be left in. If doublets be thrown, the player throwing has the right to a second cast. When a player has got rid of all his men, then, in order to win, he must still throw a *free cast* (*slå fristag*), that is to say, he must turn up an ace or a six (according to whichever be the customary mode of play). When he has done that he is pronounced the winner." We have translated literally, but it is not all as clear and comprehensible as it ought to be.

One historical fact of unexpected interest we have learned from this account of the Swedish sice-ace game, which the description of the English game could not have taught us. In the latter, as the reader will remember, there was no mention of the singular "deuce" feature (by that name at least); the occurrence of this in the Swedish game enables us to recognise this variety as that which is mentioned in the Alphonsine codex as "seis dos è as" ("sice-deuce-ace"), thus identifying as still in existence, after more than six centuries, another of the varieties of "tables" practised in the days of the royal author (see p. 253). We have no doubt that a faithful and searching study of his manuscript, accompanied by an equally careful examination of all the other mediæval documents relating to the *ludus tabularum*, followed by a complete investigation of all the modern backgammon games, would lead to the discovery of several other such survivals. In regard to the game of *sice-(deuce)-ace* it is to be considered a backgammon game only because the backgammon-men are used in it, for although the backgammon-board may be employed on which to throw the dice, the board-points do not seem to have any proper part in the game. We may conclude from what we already know, which is far too little, that the name "tables," or *ludus tabulorum*, was a generic name for all the varieties played on the "tables," or perhaps, rather that "tabulæ" really referred to the two boards (one, with twelve points belonging to one player, the other just like it, considered as belonging to or placed before the other player), which were joined together to make what we now call the "backgammon-board." Hence the use of the plural "tabulæ." Later on, as one variety became more prominent than others in different countries, the term "tables" went out of use and the board was called, especially in lands north of the Alps, by the name of the variety most generally played. Perhaps the custom of including in one piece, on the outer sides of which were chess and morris

boards and on the inner side ("within the tables") the backgammon board, may have had something to do with the abandonment of the name "tables."

We come at last to the nard-backgammon game in Iceland and its literature. Dice were known in the Northern island at a very early date; indeed it is hardly doubtful that the first settlers, coming from the great Germanic world, brought the knowledge of those ancient gaming implements with them. They are mentioned, and their use condemned in the *Grágás* ("grey goose," so called, say some, because the original code was written with a wild goose quill, because, say others, it was bound in grey). The name was first given to a law-code of North Norway, the "Frostuþingslög"—based on laws enacted by the popular assembly (*þing*), which met on the peninsula of Frosta near Trondhjem—and then in the XVIth century erroneously applied to the laws of the Icelandic commonwealth. By act of the Althing, steps were taken as early as 1018 to commit the laws of the land to writing, but some time must have elapsed before there was anything like a complete written code. The commonwealth came to an end in 1281. The oldest existing MS of the *Grágás* was transcribed about 1235, but there were certainly older ones which have now disappeared. It is quite probable that the enactments of the Frostuþing had an influence upon the development of the laws of Iceland, even during the period of Iceland's independence. The centre of the Frostuþing district was the city of Trondhjem, the ancient Niðarós, and that was the place of all Norway with which the people of Iceland were most familiar, on account of many interests besides their commercial ones. Therefore it is natural that there should have been, at a very early day, a provision in both Icelandic and Norwegian law-codes like the following, which we copy from the *Grágás*, edited by Vilhjálmur Finsen (Copenhagen 1852, ii. p. 169). There are two vellums of the commonwealth laws, one in the Royal Library at Copenhagen, the other in the Arna-Magnæan collection. Dr. Finsen edited both, but the clause cited is from the Royal codex (under the heading: *Um verpla kast oc tafl*); "þat er mælt ilögum várom at menn scolo eigi casta verplom til fiar en ef casta oc varðar fjorbaugs garð Men scolo oc eigi tefla sva at þeir legi fe við, oc enga þa lute er manne þickir betra at hafa en on at vera. En þeim er fe legr við tafl eða aðra lute þa er varða fiorbaugs garð, end erat heimting til fiar þess. En eigi scal kasta." In this extract we have retained, of course, the original orthography of the MS. It will be noticed that dice-players are here condemned to outlawry, the second or minor degree, if we may so speak, of that penalty. In one of the laws given to Norway by King Magnús Hákonsson (who reigned from 1263 to 1280), called the *lagabætir*, or reformer of the law, we find this chapter against dicing virtually repeated (see "Norges gamle love," Christiania 1848, ii, p. 266) under the heading "Vm veðian ok dulplan"—the final word is doubtless a copyist's blunder for "duplan," that is, *duflan*, being paragraph XXVIII of the section known as the *kaupabálkur:* "Ef menn dufla eða kasta tenningum um pæninga se uppnemt konongs vmboðs manne allt þat er a borðe liggr oc huer þeirra sækr halfre mork sylfrs uið konong en ef men veðia hafe at engo oc se sæktta laust." In these provisions forbidding the practice of dicing we have two distinct names for dice. The first, apparently the older, is *verpill*. This is set down by Guðbrand Vigfússon, in his (Oxford) Icelandic-English dictionary, as the German "würfel," but this seems hardly to comprise the whole story. The Icelandic has a verb, *verpa*,

meaning to "throw," "cast" (the Anglo-saxon "weorpan," English "warp"), just as the Germans have a similar and allied verb, "werfen," with a like meaning. Now the noun *verpill* is formed by means of a well-known nominal suffix (*-ill*) from this verb, just as the German noun "würfel" comes from the German verb, and both signify the thing cast or thrown, namely the *die*. *Verpill* has other meanings, especially that of a barrel or cask, or a vessel made by means of *warped* pieces of word, and in this we have the sense of the English "warp," the congener of the Icelandic *verpa*. Whether the Icelandic noun *verpill* can, under these circumstances, be said to be derived from the German *würfel* is a question awaiting the decision of philologists. The other word for "die" is *tenningur* (with the modern form *teningur*). Guðbrand Vigfússon says of this word that the "Dan. 'terning' is a corrupt form, for the word is no doubt from *tönn*='tooth,' 'tusk,' the dice being made of walrus-tusk." This all looks reasonable enough so far as the old Icelandic *tenningr*, the Danish "terning," the Swedish "tärning" are concerned. But how about the Dutch "teerling?" The Icelandic *tönn*, the English "tooth," the Danish and Dutch Swedish "tand" are all the same word and all signify "tooth." But is it certain that the most common word in all the Scandinavian dialects, and a frequent term in the Dutch, for "die," is to find its etymology in a word meaning "tooth?" The lexicographer has been influenced by the belief, to which so much currency was given, both in England and Denmark, by Sir Frederick Madden, that chessmen were largely manufactured in Iceland from walrus-tusks and exported therefrom—a subject to which we shall return hereafter.

In the saga of St. Ólaf (or St. Olave, as he was known in London), one of the great series of royal biographies, written by Snorri Sturluson, the greatest of Icelanders (we cite the edition of Munch and Unger, Christiania, 1853, p. 90), occurs a dice incident. The holy Ólaf and his contemporary, the Swedish king of the same name, had a meeting of reconciliation at Konungahella in Norway in 1020. There was talk of a place, the situation of which was in doubt, that is, whether it lay in Sweden or Norway. The sagaman entitles the story of what followed "Fra casti konunga," "about the (dice) cast of the kings:" "Sva sagði Þorsteinn froði, at bygð sv la i Hising er fylgt hafði ymist til Noregs eða til Gautlanz. Þat melto pa konungar sin i milli, at þeir scylldv luta [draw lots] um eign þa oc casta til tenningvm [throw dice], scylldi sa hafa er stærra castaði [cast the higher]. Þa castaði Svia konungr. vi. tvav. [Then the king of the Swedes threw sixes two], oc melti at Olafr konungr þurfti eigi at casta. Hann svaraði oc hristi tenningana [shook the dice] i hendi ser: enn ero vi. tvav [two sixes] a tenningonom oc er gvði drotni minom enn litið fire at lata þat upp horfa. Hann castaði oc como upp tvav sex [double sixes]. Þa castaði Svia konungr. vi. ii. [two sixes]. Þa castaði Noregs konungr. Var þa. vi. a avðrom. en annarr hraut i svndr, oc voro þar þa. vii. eignaðiz þa bygðina. Eigi havfum ver heyrt getið fleire tiðænda a þeim fundi. Scildvz konungar sattir." This is told, let it be remembered, by the same historian who gives us, in the same saga, our first absolutely certain knowledge that any Icelander knew chess, since he (Snorri Sturluson) not only alludes to chess, in a story about the Danish king Canute and one of his nobles, but makes the king leave "a knight *en prise*," attesting the writer's intimate acquaintance with the game. The above passage is thus translated in Samuel Laing's version of

Snorri Sturluson's "Heimskringla," which includes the "Olafs saga helga" (2d ed. London, 1889, iii, pp. 1-2): "Thorstein frode [froði=the learned] relates of this meeting, that there was an isolated district in Hising which had sometimes belonged to Norway and sometimes to Gautland [Gothia, a part of Sweden]. The kings came to the agreement between themselves that they would cast lots by the dice to determine who should have the district. The Swedish king threw two sixes, and said king Olaf need scarcely throw. He replied, while shaking the dice in his hand: 'Although there be two sixes on the dice, it would be easy, sire, for God almighty to let them turn up in my favour.' Then he threw and had sixes also. Now the Swedish king threw again, and had again two sixes. Olaf king of Norway then threw, and had six upon one die, and the other split in two so as to make seven eyes in all upon it; and the district was adjudged to Norway. We have heard of nothing else of any interest that took place at this meeting; and the kings separated the dearest of friends." The translation is not very good, but it gives an idea of the incident. We see by the tale that dice-boxes were not then known even among kings, and that the dice were therefore cast from the hand (see p. 186) in the ancient manner.

The incident is repeated in another saga, the "Orkneyinga saga," or tales of the earls (jarls) of the Orkneys. We quote from the edition edited by Guðbrand Vigfússon for the English master of the rolls (London 1887, i. 93): "I Englandi óru tveir menn þeir er mikit fè lögðu við kast [at cast, that is on dice-throwing], ok hafði annarr látið mikit fè. Þa lagði hann út kugg einn [a "cog," a kind of ship], og allt þat sem hann átti, í móti því öllu, er hann hafði áðr látið. En hinn kastaði fyrir sex tvau. Þá þótti hinum sèr uvænt horfa, ok hèt á inn helga Magnús jarl, at hann skyldi eigi láta sínu eigu alla; ok kastaði síðan. En tenningrinn hraut í sundr annarr, ok komu upp tvau sex ok áss; ok hlaut hann allt þat er við lá, ok síðan gaf hann Magnúsi jarl mikit fè." The tale is apparently omitted in the English version of the saga by J. A. Hjaltalín and Gilbert Goudie (edited by Joseph Anderson, Edinburgh 1873). It is thus rendered: "In England there were two men, and both staked much at dice, and one had lost a great deal. Finally the loser staked his ship against all that he had lost, and called on St. Magnus [an Orkney saint, who had been earl of the islands] that he should not let him lose all his property; and then threw. One die broke in two in such a way that there came up two sixes and an ace; and he thus won the whole stake, and he gave the saint a large contribution." This is very likely a reminiscence of Snorri's story.

Still another incident of this sort is related in the "Sturlunga saga," the story of the deeds of the family to which Snorri Sturluson belonged. It was written by his nephew, Sturla Þórðarson, and is really a general history of Iceland during a large portion of the XIIIth century (from 1202 to 1262). The event in which we are interested is narrated in the edition of the "Sturlunga" by Guðbrand Vigfússon (Oxford 1878, i, 328), the text telling us that two hostile chiefs, Kolbeinn and Sighvatur, met, in order to settle their differences, in the Hörgadal in the North of Iceland; "En er þeir kómu til fundarins, ok menn leitaðu um sættir, kom þat helzt ásamt, at annarhvárr skyldi einn göra; ok skyldu þeir þat hluta með sèr, ok kasta til tenningum. En er þeir hlutuðu fyrir kast, kastaði Sighvatur daus ok ás. Þá

mælti einn af fylgðarmönnum Kolbeins: 'Smátt fèll nu ór hendi, Sighvatur bondi.' En i siðustum köstum kastaði Sighvatr stærra, og hlaut at göra. Hann lauk eigi görð upp á þeim fundi." There is not much to this little narrative, but we find by it that in the earlier half of the XIIIth century the words *daus* ("deuce") and *ás* ("ace") were in common use in Iceland, and that dice were still thrown from the hand, for the remark to Sighvatr, on his casting deuce-ace, made by a spectator, 'not much fell out of your hand then, master Sighvatr," proves this.

We have seen that the paragraph about dicing in one of king Hákon's Norwegian laws had the heading: *Um dubl*, "About gaming." This word *dubl* (often written *dufl*, but even then the *f* has the sound of *b*) is, like the Danish "dobbel" ("dice-gaming"), connected with the German verb "doppeln" (to "gamble") and means "dice-play," or "gambling," since in the North as in Germany in those old days, there was little gambling of any other sort than by means of dice. It even occurs in an early Icelandic mathematical work "Algorismus," dating from about the beginning of the XIVth century, in its original signification of "double." Elsewhere in the old literature, so far as we know, its sense is always that of dice-play (gambling). About the year 1271 King Magnus, the "law-betterer," sent to his new subjects a code of laws, compiled under his direction, by some learned Icelanders residing in Norway, the chief among whom is supposed to have been the historian Sturla, author of the "Sturlunga." It was called *Járnsiða* ("Ironside"), perhaps from its binding, or the case in which it was kept. This was finally accepted in its entirety by the Althing, but soon became unpopular, so that a new law-code was compiled in Norway within a decade and sent out to Iceland in 1281. This code was brought from Norway by Jón Einarsson, the "lögmaður," or "lawyer," as he was titled. For this reason the book was called *Jónsbók;* it has been in force ever since, being still what may be called the "common law" of Iceland. We do not find the word *dufl* (*dubl*) in the *Járnsiða*, where *tafl* is incorrectly used for it. The phraseology of a part of chapter XXI of the section *kaupabálkr* is: "Vunder tafl eða tenneng skal engi maðr fe sitt leggia. En sa, er tefldr verðr til eyres, giallde kononge XII aura, oc sua sa er af honom teflerr." The editors render *tafl eða tenneng* by "aleæ et tesseræ." In their Icelandic glossary they translate *tefli ek* by "alea ludo," and after some remarks about the orthography of *tabl* (*tafl*) and *tebla* (*tefla*) timidly suggest an etymology: "An a Latinorum tabula?"—all of which shows that they knew very little about the matter. (*Járnsiða*, published by the Arnamagnæan commission, Copenhagen 1847, pp. 127-8 and 176). The word occurs again, however, in the *Gulaþingslög*, another provincial law (like the "Frostuþingslög") of Norway, in which the XXVIIIth paragraph bears the title: *Um dubl* (edition of Copenhagen 1817, pp. 521-2). This clause was copied substantially into the "Jónsbók," as chapter XVIII of the section *þjófabálkur* (relating to theft), which we copy. The heading is: *Umm dufl og teniningakast* ("concerning gambling and dice-play" or "casting of dice"). The text is: "Ef menn dufla eður kasta teningum umm peninga, sè uppnæmt kongs ummboðsmanne allt það er við borð liggur, ok hver þeirra sekur halfre mørk við kong. Enn ef menn veðja, hafe að öngvu og sè sektalaust." We have used the edition of Hólar (Iceland) of 1709 (p. 440). The English is as follows: "If men gamble or throw dice for money, every thing on the board is forfeit to the king's commissary,

and each is fined half a mark of silver to the king. But if they wager, nothing is to be paid to any one, and the parties are not to be convicted." Outside of legal literature the word occurs in one of the most popular of all the Icelandic sagas, the "Grettis saga"; it is found in a verse (the edition of Valdimar Ásmundarson, Reykjavík 1900, pp. 140-141):

Segðu í breiðar bygðir
Bráðlyndr, at þú fyndir
Uppi alt hjá Kroppi,
Álmþollr, Söðulkollu.
Þar var staddr á steddu--
Strjúk allmikinn, Halli!—
Drengur sá er drýgir löngum
Dufl, í svörtum kufli.

The verse is ascribed to Grettir, the hero of the saga, and not very easily understood without the context. William Morris, the poet, who made such good use of the old Icelandic literature, has put the stanza into English, retaining to some extent the alliteration so characteristic of Icelandic verse:

In broad-peopled lands say thou
That thou sawest even now
Unto Kropp-farm's gate anigh,
Saddle-fair and Elm-stalk high;
That thou sawest stiff on steed
(Get thou gone at greatest speed),
One who loveth game and play
Clad in cape of black to-day.

Here *dufl* is translated by "game and play." The date of the saga, as the literary historian, Dr. Finnur Jónsson, surmises, cannot be earlier than 1300. He ascribes its compilation to an anonymous priest in the neighbourhood of Miðfjörður in North-Iceland.[178]

[178] The word *dufl (dubl)* has of late years been occasionally used in an unwarranted way in Iceland, but has been revived in America in its general sense of "gambling." After some communications concerning its real signification in the columns of the Winnipeg *Heimskringla*, the editor, in a leading article (vol. xviii, no. 13, 1904), cites a communication from an anonymous correspondent giving explanations of the word, but without any special knowledge of its early history or etymology. He cites the "Jónsbók" (giving the year of its arrival in Iceland as 1270, instead of 1281). He cites correctly enough the comment on the word in the journal of the learned society "Lærdomslistafélag" (vol. ii, 1782, p. 127), where the three lines devoted to *dubl* read; "*(lusus alearis, hazard-spil, dobbel)* af *duplex*, tvofalldr, en orðit merkir her tebling eller spilan, er tveir leika saman." These papers in the "Rit þess íslenzka Lærdomslistafélags" were selected from a glossary of the old words in Icelandic law-books, made by Páll Vidalín, speaker of the Althing (b. 1667, d. 1727). The complete publication of his "Skýringar yfir fornyrði lögbókar" did not take place until 1854 (Reykjavík), but the explanation of the word *dubl* was, for some reason, not included. At present it is safe to assume that *dubl (dufl)*, when used, is applied to any kind of gambling, but in its old sense it meant only gambling by dice-play. *Tafl*, wrongfully employed in "Járnsíða," signifies any table-game, but, in its most modern interpretation, is generally applied to chess. Its verb, *tefla*, means, in its original sense, to "play at a table game" (tables, chess, draughts, backgammon and so on), but it has been used also, though incorrectly, as applicable to the casting of dice. — That profound linguistic scholar, the late college-rector Jón Þorkelsson, explains the verse containing *dufl* in the Grettis saga in his "Skýringar á vísum í Grettis sögu" (Reykjavík 1871, pp. 18-19). He adds to his explication the following concise historical note: "*Dufl*, tafl til fjár eða um fé. Þetta orð finst að minni vitund eigi í eldri íslenzkum bókum, enn *Jónsbók*, er hèr var lögtekin 1281: 'Um dufl og teningakast. Ef menn dufla eða kasta teningum um peninga, sè uppnæmt konungs umboðsmanni alt þat er við liggr, ok hverr þeirra sekr hálfri mörk við konung.' *Þjofabálkr*, 18. kap. Grein þessi er tekin ur 28 kap. Kaupabálks í *Landslögum* Magnúss Lagabœtis, en þau vorn lögtekin árið 1274 (Norges gamle Love, II. 178). Í *Grágás* mun orðið *dufl* eigi finnast; enn í henni

The most important of the few works in the old Icelandic language which were produced in Norway is incontestably the *Konungs-skuggsjá* or "Royal mirror," a sort of didactic treatise, devoted to practical ethics, reminding one a little, in its general spirit, of the "Perfetto Cortigiano" of Castiglione, although addressed to less elevated classes of society. Its author is unknown, and its date is generally regarded to be about 1250. It mentions both table-games and dice, but only to deprecate the practice of either. The edition consulted, that of the learned Icelander, Hálfdán Einarsson (Sorøe 1768, p. 436) gives the brief phrase: "Þat er ok siðgiæði at flyia tafl ok teningakast," that is "It is also good-breeding to shun table-games and the casting of dice." The author then goes on with his list of habits and vices to be avoided. The book is in the form of a colloquy between a father and a son. In an earlier passage (p. 26) exactly the same counsel had been given: "Enn ero þeir lutir, er þu skallt sua flya ok varast sem fiandann sjalfann, þat er ofdrickir ok tafl.... þrættur ok kast um viðurlaugor," that is: "There are still other things which you shall shun and avoid as you would the evil one himself, those are overdrinking and table-games.... quarrels and (diee)throwing for wagers." A more recent edition of the text (by Keyser, Munch and Unger, Christiania 1848) gives (p. 7), as a variant for the expression "kast um viðlögur," as there given, "kast ok viðlögur," "(dice)throws and betting." We have now cited, we believe, all the passages in the old literature having reference to dice-play.

The text of the passage which we have quoted from "St. Olaf's saga" is given with a slight difference in the edition contained in the "Formannasögur," a collection of ancient sagas published at Copenhagen (1829 IV, 211). Instead of the sentence "þa castaði Noregs konungr. var þa. vi. a avðrum, en annarr hraut i sundr" etc., we have a much fuller statement: "Olafr Noregs konungr kastaði eigi at síðr, var þá enn sex á öðrum, en annar hraut í sundr í tvö, ok voru þar á 7 augun, ok hafði Olafr konungr nú kastat 13, ok eignaðist hann svá bygðina." This is without doubt from a later MS than that used by the Christiania editors (which was written in Iceland in the first half of the XIIIth century), namely from a vellum in the Arna-magnæan collection but which pretty surely cannot be much more than a century later. The important point to us is in the phrase "ok voru þar á 7 augun, ok hafði Ólaf konungr nu kastat 13," "and there were on (the split die) 7 pips and king Olaf had now thrown 13," for it gives us the early Icelandic term for a point or pip on the dice, namely *auga*, being the ordinary word for "eye." Guðbrandur Vigfüsson cites it as occurring in only one other place—in the life of St. Magnus in the Orkneyinga Saga. It may be that it is found in the story cited by us from that saga, but in another MS than that used by the editors of the edition of 1780. This is of

er i þess stað talað um *verplakast og tafl*: 'Þat er mælt i lögom várom, at menn skolo eigi kasta verplom til fjár sèr; enn ef kasta, ok varðar fjörbaugsgarð. Menn skola og eigi tefla, svá at þeir leggi fè við ok enga þá hluti, er manni þikkir betra at hafa, enn ón at vera.' *Grágás*, V. Finsens útg. 233. kap.: II. 169. Orðið *dufl* virðist þannig vera eldra, enn frá síðara hlut þrettándu aldar, og ef svo er, þá er visan eigi ort í tíð Grettis." The extracts from the old laws here given vary only in orthographical details from those cited in the text. The deductions of Dr. Jón Þorkelsson are of interest, namely, that as the word *dufl* is not older than the latter half of the XIIIth century, the verse cited from the Grettis saga as the production of its hero, Grettir, could not have been written by that redoubtable personage.

some historical importance because it helps to show that dice reached Iceland directly or indirectly from Germany, and not from Great Britain. The ace bears the title common to all Europe, *ás*, as we have seen in our extracts, the deuce is *dauss* (accusative, *daus*), written like the German term, but pronounced very nearly like the old French "deus," from which comes the English "deuce." Guðbrandur Vigfússon, in his dictionary (p. 97), makes a most remarkable blunder in regard to this word, rendering it into English by "dice," and clinches the blunder by giving the phrase, *kasta daus*, with the translation, "to cast a die." The error is the more astonishing since all preceding lexicographers, like Björn Halldórsson (1814), Konráð Gíslason (1851), Sveinbjörn Egilsson (1860), Eiríkur Jónsson (1863), Johan Fritzner (1867), had given the correct definition. Both ace and deuce seem to be used figuratively in a verse in the Sturlunga saga (Oxford edition, i., p. 277), ascribed to a skald of the period, Guðmundur Galtason:

> Öld segir upp at fèlli ás gunn-vita runni
> (Frið-slit koma flotnum fram) ok dauss í Hvammi;
> Ok má af efnum slíkum allz ekki vel falla
> (Mèr er um mart þat ek heyri marg-rætt) nema lok hætti.

We shall see later on that *dís* is said to be in use as a variant of *daus*, but it has not found its way into the lexicons; the same may be said of *treja*, hereafter cited as the equivalent of the English "trey;" *kotra* is given by Björn Halldórsson (1814) as the name for the four point, while Eiríkur Jónsson has *kvotra* or *kotra; fimm* is the usual numeral "five," and *sex* is "six." We shall also learn that the throw deuce-ace is called *ás og daus*, but sometimes *ásdís*, and shall hear how the doublets are expressed.

The proverbs and sayings connected with dice are given by Ólafur Davíðsson as follows: *Forsjálum teflara er teningalukkunni að trúa*, "the prudence of the player is to trust to the fortune of the dice." *Hann lýgur á annan teninginn, en stelur á annan*, "he lies by one die, and robs by the other," the signification being far from clear. *Leika máttu, lokið er að kasta*, "you must play, the dice are thrown." *Lètt er að leika, ef teningurinn vill vel*, "it is easy to play when the dice are all right." *Ljáðu lukkunni teninga*, "Lend the dice to luck." *Stríðið er teningakast, sem veltir lukkunni upp og niður*, "the battle is the throw of the dice, which turns fortune up and down." *Teningur er vondur varningur*, "the dice are a bad piece of goods." *Ýmist veltur upp á teningum*, "anything may turn up on the dice." Then there are these expressions: *að eiga eitthvað undir teningakasti*, "to have something on the turn of the dice;" *nú kemur til minna* (*þinna*) *kasta*, "now it's my (thy) turn;" *taflið og teningurinn er hjá honum*, "he's got both the board and the dice," that is, "he has it all his own way," perhaps derived from backgammon. These two couplets are likewise cited:

> Teningurinn talus heitir
> Trygð hann litla stundum veitir,

"the die is called 'talus,' keeps only a brief faith" — "talus" being used as the Latin word for die (in which tongue it also means "ankle"); perhaps some play on that word is intended.

> Ef ábóti teninga á sèr ber,
> Oss múkum leyft að tefla er,

"if the abbot carries the dice with him, then we monks are allowed to play." Finally, in the "Dönsk orðabók" of Konráð Gíslason, to "throw or cast dice" is explained as *kasta verplum* or *kasta teningum*, but, as we have said, the latter is the more usual; "dice-box" is explained as *verplastaup*, the latter element being the Scottish "stoup," signifying "cup," "beaker," but as he thinks it necessary to explain the word carefully to his Icelandic readers, it is probably not much employed; for "dice-throw" he has both *verplakast* and *teningakast;* "dice-play" is, according to him, *verplakast,* citing "Grágás;" and "dice-pip" is *tenings-auga.*

There is also in Iceland a pure dice-game, known as *goðatafl*, in which, though sometimes a backgammon-board is used for convenience' sake in playing, the players usually sit down at any kind of a table. According to some, each player has twenty men, although Dr. Konrad von Maurer gives the number as thirty-two ("Germania," 1869, xiv., p. 108), but evidently any number previously agreed upon would answer. All cast the dice three times to decide who shall be *goði* (apparently equivalent to "banker" in some card games). This is a complicated process. In the course of it the dice are cast six times, and at each cast a line of the following verse is recited:

Heima ræð eg goða minn,
Bæði vel og leingi;
Eg skal gefa þér súrt smèr og reingi
Í góðu geingi
Og kasta eg nú fyrir þig.

Thereafter, the various players throw the dice in turn and according to the throw receive from the *goði*, or pay him, a certain number of men (they would be called "chips" in some of the American card games). Each player plays until he has lost all his men. A long description, not easily understood, is given by Ólafur Davíðsson ("Skemtanir," 1888-92, pp. 317-18). Some proverbs are connected with this game. Two are cited at the reference just given.

In accordance with the custom we have pursued, we shall give a hasty summary of the account of Icelandic backgammon contained in the essay on Icelandic games by Ólafur Davíðsson, relegating the original text to a foot-note. [179] Our sketch will include the principal matters which are treated

[179] Helzta teningatafl Islendinga er *kotra*. Hvergi er getið um hvernig hún er leikin, svo eg viti, og skýri eg því svo nákvæmlega frá henni sem eg get. Það er heldur ekki vanþörf, því kotra er mjög ótíð á Íslandi, að minsta kosti þar sem eg þekki til, en allra tafla skemtilegust og fjörlegust í raun og veru. Útlend er kotra að uppruna eins og skáktaflið, og fellst eg á það sem Sigurður málari segir: "Kotra mun vera frakkneskur leikur, eins og tölunöfnin á teningunum og eins nöfnin *mor* eða *mar* og *jan* benda til." Nafnið sjálft fellur saman við eitt tölunafnið á teningunum, eins og seinna segir, og er því sama máli að gegna með það. Samt hefir kotra þegar verið tefld á Íslandi í fornöld, eins og sést á sögunni úr Biskupasögunum, og telur Sigurður málari, að menn hafi fyrst sannar sagnir af kotrutafli á Íslandi á 12. öld. Annars er örsjaldan getið um kotru í íslenzkum bókum. Í útgáfu einni af "Búalögum" frá hèr um bil 1500 er þess þó getið að það kosti 8 álnir að kenna kvotru, og er það alt að 5 krónum. Jón biskup Arason og sèra Hallgrímur Pètursson nefna líka kotru í taflvisum sínum. Eggert Ólafsson nefnir líka kotru og hafa nokkri útlendingar, sem hafa ritað um Island nefnt nafnið eptir honum, en afbakað það þó. Eggert getur þess líka að kotra sè opt tefld í Kjósarsýslu, og er það alt og sumt, sem eg hefi sèð um tíðleik hennar á Íslandi; en nú lítur svo út sem Íslendingar hafi kotru í litlum metum, eða að minsta kosti er kotrutafli óvíða til. Til eru gömul ráð að vinna í kotru, ekki síður en skáktafli og er þetta eitt: "Ef þú vilt vinna í kotru, tak hrafnshjarta og herð það þar

either in his text or in the notes attached to it, and on certain topics we shall enlarge or supplement his observations. But despite a desire to be exact and clear, we shall be obliged, we fear, to leave many things in obscurity and many questions unsettled—partly because of the imperfect sources of information open to our writer, partly because of his want of any practical knowledge of the games he is investigating. The author states that the chief

sem sól skin ei á, myl síðan sundur og nú um teninga." Aðrar aðferðir til að vinna í kotru færir Jón Árnason til í "Þjóðsögum" sínum. Kotrumenn sögðu: "Ólafr, Olafr, Haraldr, Haraldr, Eirekr, Eirekr." "Þenna formála átti sá, sem vinna vildi, að skrifa á blað, og annaðhvort hafa á sèr blaðið eða láta það undir kotruborðið, ofan á lærinu á sèr, meðan hann tefldi, og lesa þar að auki paternoster til heiðurs Ólafi konúngi." Hitt ráðið, sem Jón Árnason nefnir, er meira í áttina til kreddurúðs þess, sem þegar er getið: "Til þess að vinna í kotru skal taka máriötlutúngu og þurka við sólu, mylja síðan saman við messuvín og láta í teningsaugun, og er þá vís vinningur." Í sömu áttina mun vera kotruvers sem Páll Vídalín nefnir og segir að "eigi gildi lífsstraff nú í lögunum og ei hafi átt að gilda að fornu nè síðan 'Jónsbók' kom inn" hvað sem áður hefir verið. Það litur svo út sem mikið hafi sagzt á kotruversum, því Árni Þórsson, sem brendur er á alþingi fyrir galdur 1681, kannast við það fyrir andlátið, meðal annars, að hann hafi reynt kotruvers með fjölkyngisbrögðum. Sagan, sem eg hefi fært til úr "Biskupasögunum," sýnir að menn hafa teflt kotru um fè til forna, en þó á "Konungs-Skuggsjá" eflaust ekki við kotru, þar sem hún varar við teningakasti, heldur teningakast um fè, tafllaust, enda varar hún á einum stað bæði við tafli og "kasti um viðlögur." Slíkt var kallað *að dufla* og kastið sjálft *dufl*; þótti illa viti að fást við það, eða vera duflari, enda segir málsháttúrinn: "Drykkjurum fást ráð, en duflurum ekki." Það eru líka til fáeinir málshættir, sem eiga beinlínis við kotru, og þekki eg þessa:

Hann er kóngur í kotru og kortspilum.
Kotra og kanna
gjöra margan fátækan manna.
Laung er von í kotru.
Nú vill ei upp nema dausinn.
Ýmsir eiga í henni kotru.

Þá er að lýsa kotrutafli eins og það er teflt nú, og set eg fyrst svo lítinn uppdrátt af taflborðinu, máli mínu til skýringar [fig. 25]. Uppdráttur þessi sýnir kotruborð opnað til fulls eða kotrutafl. Því er skipt í jafnstóra fleti. Á flatabrúnirnar eru negldir eða límdir listar, öllum meginn og mynda þeir umgerð um fletina. Reitirnir eru máladir á fletina, eins og sýnt er á myndinni, en ekki eru þeir eins lagaðir á öllum kotruborðum. Nú eru fletirnir teingdir saman með hjörum á þverlistunum og má þá leggja þá saman. Það er ávalt gjört þegar ekki er teflt, og er þá kotruborðið eingu líkara en lágum og umfangsmiklum smákassa. Í holinu milli listanna og flatanna eru teningar þeir og töflur geymdar, sem taflið er leikið með. Stundum eru mörg taflborð skeytt saman. Opt er t. d. málað skáktafl og mylnutafl, annað á botninn en hitt á lokið, á kotrutaflskassanum. Kotra er teflt með 2 teningum og 30 töflum, kringlóttum. Teningarnir eru venjulegir teningar með 6 flötum og augum á hverjum fleti, en augnatalan eru sex lægstu tölustafirnir: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. Töflurnar eru mislitar, 15 t. d. svartar, hvítar eða rauðar. Reitirnir eru 24, 12 hvorum meginn á taflinu opnu og 6 hvorum meginn í hvoru taflborði, eins og sýnt er á myndinni. Reitirnir eru náttúrlega öðruvísi litir en álagið (grunnurinn), t. d. svartir á gulu. Þeir eru ýmislega lagaðir, stundum kringlóttir, stundum aptur blaðmyndaðir eða þrístrendir, eins og á myndinni. Milli reitaraðanna er aflangt bil eptir endilöngu taflinu, öðruvísi litt en reitirnir. Þar er teningunum kastað. Í taflbyrjun situr sinn taflmaður hvorum meginn við taflið. Eg kalla þá A og B til hægri verka; hvor þeirra hefir 15 töflur til umráða og allar eins litar. A setur allar sínar töflur upp á reit þann, sem er leingst til hægri handar honum, í þeirri taflborðshlið hans, sem snýr frá honum og er hún stundum kölluð *heimaborð*. Eg hugsa mèr hann fyrir neðan myndina og læt hann setja þær upp á *a*. B fer eins að. Hann setur sínar töflur upp á 1. Svo kastar hvor sínum teningi, hvor í sínu borði. Sá sem fær fyr minna kast leikur fyrst. Kast með báðum teningunum segir til hver leikurinn er, eða hvernig á að leika töflunum. Augnatala sú, sem kemur upp á teningunum, er kölluð *ás, daus* eða *dís, treja, kotra, fimm* eða *sex* eptir því hvort 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 eða 6 koma upp. Ef sama augnatalan kemur upp á báðum teningunum í sama kasti, eru það kölluð *samvörp* og heita þau ásar allir, trejur allar o. s. frv., eptir því hver talan er. Sexin öll eru líka kölluð *tólfin*. Sá sem fær samvörp verður að leika

Icelandic dice-game is backgammon (*kotra*). No detailed account of its method of play has yet been published, so far as is known, in Icelandic, and he therefore proposes to explain it as fully as may be. This is not by any means a useless task, for backgammon has now become infrequent in Iceland, at least in those parts known to the writer, while in many respects it is the most amusing and liveliest of all table-games. The old sagas show that

tölu þeirri sem upp kom fjórum sinnum, ef hann getur. Jón Ólafsson segir að sumir kalli það *ellefin*, þegar 6 komur upp á öðrum teningnum en 5 á hinum. Þannig er leikið að ein tafla eða tvær töflur eru færðar um eins marga reiti og augnatala sú bendir á, sem kemur upp í hverju kasti, og er talið frá reitnum, sem taflan stóð á. Ef A fær t. d. kotru og daus við fyrsta kastið, þá flytur hann tvær töflur, aðra til *c* en hina til *e*. Hann getur líka náttúrlega flutt eina til *g*, en optast er vant að fara út með tvær töflur fyrst, ef þess er kostur, en það er ávalt, nema þegar töflin koma upp (í fyrsta kasti). Þá er ekki mögulegt að færa nema eina töflu. Sumir segja aptur að þegar svo ber undir, megi fara út með 4 töflur, og leika þeim öllum á 6. reit frá uppsetningarreitnum. Það fylgir sögunni, að mótstöðumaðurinn megi drepa þær, eða *rifa* þær *upp*, eigi hann kost á því, áður en hinn hefir dreift úr þeim. Þetta kvað þó ekki vera íslenzk regla. Þegar A hefir kastað og leikið, leikur B. Ekkert er á móti því, að taflmaður leiki á reiti þá, sem hann á töflu fyrir á, en ekki má hann láta tvær eða fleiri töflur standa á reit eða *reita*, fyr en á yzta reit í þeirri taflhliðinni sem snýr frá honum. Þó er honum það því að eins heimilt, að hann sé kominn með 5 töflur út af uppsetningarreitnum eða kominn út með 5 töflur. Á má því reita eða koma sér upp reit á *l*. Aptur er honum heimilt að reita hvar sem hann vill hinum meginn á taflinu, með sama skilmála og getið hefir verið um. Töflurnar gánga nefnilega frá A's hlið yfir í B's hlið, frá *l*-1 og svo áfram að 12. Gangsvið þeirra er því frá *a* til 12 og frá 1 til *l*. B's töflur. Hvorugur má leika á þann reit, sem mótstöðumaður hans á reit á, nema honum sé ómögulegt að komast yfir reitaröð hans. Þá má hann *rifa upp* fyrir honum, drepa reitaðar töflur, þar sem hann getur. Ef B á t. d. reiti á 1, *l*, *k*, *j*, *i*, og *h*, þá getur A ekki komizt yfir, ekki einu sinni þótt hann fái 6 upp á teningunum, má hann þá rifa upp, eptir því sem kast hans segir til. Það þarf því að gjalda varhuga við, að reita á 6 reiti, hvern við annan. Þegar mótstöðumaðurinn á aptur að eins töflu á reit, þá má A færa sína töflu á þann reit og *drepa* hina, ef svo vill verkast. Verður B að *koma* henni aptur *inn* í heimaborð sitt, en þá er uppsetningarreiturinn talinn með. Ef hann fær t. d. kotru og sex, eptir að tvær töflur hafa verið drepnar fyrir honum, þá verður hann að koma þeim inn á 4 og 6. Annars er hann leiklaus, þángað til hann hefir komið þeim inn. En þess er opt langt að bíða, því ekki má hann setja dauðar töflur inn á þá reiti, sem hann á töflur fyrir á eða mótstöðumaður hans reiti, nema hann eigi fleiri töflur dauðar en reitir þeir eru, sem hann getur komizt inn á. Þá má hann rifa upp reiti mótteflarans, eptir því sem köst hans segja til. Ef svo stendur á töfluskipan annarshvors, að hann getur ekki leikið optir kasti því, sem hann hefir feingið, þá er hann leiklaus í það skipti. Svona geingur taflið með drápum og töfum. Það er mikið eða mest komið undir því að tefja hvor fyrir öðrum, en góð ráð eru til þess að eiga marga reiti í borði hins, svo honum veiti erviðara að komast inn, ef drepið er fyrir honum. Þó verður opt að hafa hemil á drápinu, svo að mótteflarinn geti ekki rifið upp. Það þykir líka farsælt í kotru, að ná *kverkatakinu*, eða ná yzta reit í heimaborði mótstöðumannsins og reit þeim sem er næstur við hann. Ef A á reit á 6 og 7, þá hefir hann kverkatakið. Loksins er það snjallræði að koma sér upp reitaröð, yzt í þeirri taflborðshlið sinni, sem að manni snýr, eða *úttektarborðinu*, með öðrum orðum, því þá er vanséð að mótteflarinn komist yfir nema endur og eins, en ekki mega reitirnir vera 6, því þá er móstöðumanninum ómögulegt að komast yfir, og má því rifa upp. Með þessu móti eru mest líkindi til að geta gjört mótstöðumann sinn *jan*, eða *janað* hann, og er það mestur vinningur í kotru, en þá er annar *jan*, þegar hann á fleiri töflur dauðar en honum er mögulegt að koma inn. Við *jan* endar taflið, eins og eðlilegt er, og eins við *úttekt*, sem er venjulegasti vinningurinn. Jón Ólafsson talar um *janstork* í forkæringi og kotru, og er það eflaust sama sem *jan*, en ekki getur hann um, hvernig orðinu hefir verið komið fyrir, hvort sagt hefir verið "að verða janstork" eða hvað? Annars skil eg ekki Jón hér, og ekki þeir sem eg hefi borið undir klausu hans. Hann er fyrst eitthvað að tala um að *janstork* sé kallað, þegar annarhvor komist ekki í hornið, en hinn komist út. Þegar allar töflur manns eru komnar í úttektarborðið, t. d. A's töflur á reitina 7-12, þá má fara að *taka út*, en líka má leika, ef vill, meðan þess er kostur. Úttektin er fólgin í því, að taka töflur sínar út úr borðinu, og eru þær, sem út eru teknar, úr sögunni. Gott er að fá samvörp við úttekt, því þá má taka 4 töflur út. Þegar tekið er út, er talið eins og þegar töflum er komið inn. Ef A á reiti á 9,

people formerly took much pleasure in backgammon, and there is a singular narrative connected with it in the sagas of the Icelandic bishops ("Biskupa-sögur," ii. 1878, pp. 176-7). It is there said: "It happened in the western fjords that two men sat at the backgammon board, which is of common use in those districts—although it is not a praiseworthy custom—and were wagering several of the objects which they possessed; in the end it began

10, 11, 12 og fær fimm og treju, þá verður hann að taka fimmið út af 9, en sjálfráður er hann, hvort hann leikur trejunni til 12 eða tekur hana út úr 10. Yfir höfuð að tala, er sá, sem fær hærri köst en hann getur leikið, meðan stendur á úttekt, skyldur að taka aptan af reitaröð sinni, og verður það opt til þess að mótstöðumaður hans getur dreplð fyrir honum. Þegar svo ber undir, verður sá sem á töfluna að setja hana inn í heimaborð sitt, eins og aðrar dauðar töflur, og má ekki halda áfram með úttektina, fyr en hann hefir komið henni aptur í úttektarborð sitt. *Jan* og úttekt eru aðalvinningarnir í kotru, en auk þess eru til aukavinningar og eru þeir 4: *meistari, stutti múkur, langi múkur* og *langihryggur*. Meistari er fólginn í því, að geta sett allar töflur upp í hinum yzta reit, sem þær geta verið á. Ef allar töflur A's standa á 12, þá hefir hann feingið meistara. Ef hann hefir sínar 5 töflur á hverjum reitanna 10, 11 og 12, þá hefir hann feingið stutta múk. Ef hann hefir komið sínum þrem töflum á hvern reitinn 8, 9, 10, 11 og 12, þá hefir hann feingið langa múk. Langi hryggur eru 5 [*sic*] töflur á hverjum reitanna 7, 8, 9, 10 og 11. Hann kemur varla fyrir, nema mótstöðumaðurinn eigi reit á 12; leitast maður því við eptir megni, að ná þessum reit frá honum og spila þá heldur upp á múk. Betra er en ekki að fá *múkana hálfa*, en það er ef maður getur komið öllum töflunum í ákvcðið horf, með annari augnatölunni, sem kemur upp. B spilar t. d. upp á stutta múk og hefir 5 töflur á 12, 5 á 11, 4 á 10 og 1 á 7. Nú kastar hann og fær t. d. sex og treju. Hann leikur að eins trejunni og fær hálfan múk. Sumir telja *litla meistara* með múkum. Það er litli meistari þegar 8 töflur eru á yzta reitnum, sem töflurnar geta komizt á, en 7 á þeim næsta. Aptur eru þeir flestir sem ekki taka þenna litla meistara gildan. Það eykur hvern vinning, ef mótteflandinn á dauða töflu, þegar vinningurinn fæst; er þá kallað að mótteflarinn verði *mar* á úttekt, múkum o. s. frv. Þegar A hefir tekið allar töflur sínar út, en B er ekki farinn að taka út, þá má B hafa 5, 7 og 13 *eptirköst*, eptir því hvort hann ætlar sér að reyna til að fá langa múk, stutta múk eða meistara, og eru þeir góðir og gildir ef hann fær þá með því móti. Einstaka menn leyfa þó eingin eptirköst, og eru múkar mjög sjaldgæfir með því móti. Miklu er frægra að fá aukavinningana en úttekt. Meistari er fremstur á blaði. Þá stutti múkur. Þá langi múkur. Þá langi hryggur lægstur í lopti. Eg hefi vitað vinninginn talinn í tölum á þenna hátt. Einföld úttekt 2, langi hryggur 3, langi múkur 5, stutti múkur 7, meistari 13, *jan* 15. Fyrir *mar* bætast 2 við hvorn vinning sem er. Fyrir *mar* á stutta múk eru t. d. 9. Fyrir hálfa múka er helmingurinn af því, sem er fyrir múkinn. Þegar annar hefir tekið allar sínar töflur út og útséð er um að hinn fái múk, er taflinu lokið. Sumir leyfa þeim, sem seinna lèk í taflbyrjun, að leika einu kasti, eptir að hinn hefir tekið út, og láta vera jafntefli, ef þá verður jafut. Þessi regla kemur einkum til greina við úttekt, því opt á annar að eins eptir 2 eða 4 töflur, þegar hinn er kominn út. Regla þessi kemur vel heim við það, að leyfa eingin eptirköst. Ef fleiri kotrur en ein eru tefldar hver eptir aðra, þá á sá að kasta fyrst næst, sem unnið hefir úttekt eða *janað* hinn. Múkar koma þá ekki til greina.

Jón Ólafsson getur um kotru, en alt sem hann segir um hana er á ringulreið, svo lítið er á því að græða. Fyrst getur hann um *kotungatafl* og segir að það sè sama sem kotra; dragi hún nafn af því, að hún sé leikin með 4 riddurum, eða af því hún sè ferstrend. Annarstaðar segir Jón, að í kotungatafli standi 4 riddarar móti öllum "peðjunum." Nú fara eingar sögur af því að kotra hafi verið leikin með riddurum eða peðum og leikur mèr því grunur á, að hèr sè eitthvað bogið. Í annan stað nefnir Jón *kvennkotru* sem sumir kalli kotru. Hann lýsir henni ekki. Í þriðja lagi nefnir Jón *alkotru*. Eg hefi ekki heyrt getið um neitt af þessum nöfnum annarsstaðar en hèr og get ekkert um þau sagt. Loksins segir Jón Ólafsson að sumir kalli kotru eingelskt *ticktack* og jafnvel *forkæring*. Nokkru seinna segir Jón að kotrutöfl sèu: 1. *að elta stelpur*, 2. *ofanfellingartafl*, 3. *forkæringur*, 4. *goðatafl*, 5. *Ólafs kóngs tafl*. Þessa skiptingu get eg alls ekki fallizt á, því kotra, eins og hún er tefld nú, og hefir að öllum líkindum verið tefld þá, er alveg ólík t. d. goðatafli. Eg minnist því á þessi töfl út af fyrir sig og læt þau ekki vera kotrutegundir.

Það er þó eitt af töflum þeim, sem Jón Ólafsson vísar til sætis undir kotru, sem á þar heima að réttu lagi, en það er *piprjállinn*, því hann er ekki annað en breytt kotra. Munurinn kemur fram við samvörpin. Þegar töflin koma upp í kotru, er sexi leikið fjórum sinnum, en í piprjál er sexunum leikið fyrst, svo fimmunum, svo kotrunum, svo trejunum,

to go very badly for one of the combatants, since the dice absolutely refused to favor him; but that is the wicked nature of this game that the more one stakes and loses, the more difficult it becomes to get away from the board. So the games went on until there was suddenly no more oil (in their lamp). There seemed to be nothing to do except to abandon play, for this all took place on a dark night, but this did not content the losing player, who exclaimed in a low voice: 'If the good St. Guðmund will that I win back that which I have lost, then I will occupy myself much less with this useless folly hereafter than heretofore.' Then he said to his opponent: 'My friend, we will play on.' The other replies: 'How can we, since we have nothing to furnish us light?' 'Lack of that shall not hinder us,' he responded; thereupon he rises from the table, takes a vessel, goes to the holy well of

svo dausunum og seinast ásunum. Þegar ásarnir koma aptur upp, er þeim leikið fyrst, svo dausunum, svo trejunum, svo kotrunum, svo fimmunum, svo sexunum. Þegar kotrur, trejur eða dausar koma upp, er þeim leikið niður á við, en ásunum seinast, en þegar fimmin koma upp, þá er þeim leikið upp á við, eða að eins fimmunum og sexunum. Þetta er allur munurinn. Piprjáll var líka kallaður *koprjáll*, og er þá auðskilið hvernig "kopar í alin" er komið inn í taflvísu séra Hallgríms Péturssonar. Séra Jón Ýngvaldsson vill láta að *pípóla* ("leika, dansa eða spila") vera sama sem *piprjóla* og eiga skylt við piprjál.

Ofanfelling eða *ofanfellingartafl*. Tafl þetta er leikið í kotruborði og leika tveir. Hvor fyrir sig setur tvær töflur á hvern reit í taflborðshlið þeirri, sem snýr frá honum, til hægri handar. Annar hefir svörtu töflurnar, en hinn hvítu töflurnar. Því næst er kastað um hver eigi að byrja. Sá, sem fær fleiri augu í einu kasti, kastar teningunum og færir efri töflurnar á reitunum niður við hliðina á neðri töflunni, eptir því hver köst hann fær. Ef hann fær t. d. sex og daus, þá færir hann niður töflurnar í sex og daus sætunum. Ef hann fær samvörp, þá getur hann ekki flutt nema eina töflu niður, en hefir rètt til að kasta aptur, og það þó hann fái mörg samvörp, hver eptir önnur. Hinn kastar nú og fer alt á sömu leið, og svo koll af kolli. Ef kast það kemur upp, sem svarar til reitanna, sem búið er [að] færa efri töfluna ofan af, þá verður það kast ónýtt. Þegar annarhvor eða báðir hafa fært allar töflurnar ofan, flytja þeir þær upp á neðri töflunar aptur, þar sem þær voru fyrst, eptir því sem köstin segja til. Þegar allar töflurnar eru komnar upp aptur, er farið að taka þær út, og fer það fram alveg eins og í kotru. Sá vinnur sem er fyrri að taka allar töflur sínar út. Jón Ólafsson drepur að eins á ofanfellingartafl en lýsir því ekki. Sigurður málari drepur líka á það. Hallgrímur Pétursson nefnir það. — This, as the reader will at once understand, corresponds to the "doblet" of King Alfonso, the English variety known as "doublets," and the French "dames rabattues," which last has a name agreeing in significance with that of the Icelandic variety (see pp. 188 and 299-300).

Að elta steipu. Tafl þetta er líka leikið í kotruborði. Tveir tefla. Annar hefir til umráða 6 hvítar töflur en hinn 6 svartar, og er þeim skipað eins og í ofanfellingartafli, nema hèr stendur að eins ein á hverjum reit. Hèr er líka kastað um það hvor eigi að byrja, og er það sá, sem fær hærri augnatölu í einu kasti. Hann kastar nú. Ef hann fær upp sex, þá flytur hann tvær yztu töflurnar fram fyrir hinar til vinstri, og eins ef hann fær samvörp, nema tólfin, því þeim fylgir rèttur til að flytja fjórar. Auk þess má hann kasta aptur eptir öll samvörp. Ef hann fær ás, þá leikur hann einni. Hin köstin eru öll ónýt. Því næst kastar hinn, og fer alt á sömu leið, og svo koll af kolli. Þegar fremsta tafla annarshvors er komin út á endann á taflhelmingnum, þá flytur hann öptustu töflu(r) sína(r) yfir þvert taflborðið, á næsta reit í hinum taflhelmingnum, eptir því sem köstin segja til. Ef töflur annarshvors standa t. d. á reitunum *g-l* í vinstra kotru-taflborðinu (sjá myndina) og hann fær sex og ás, þá flytur hann töflurnar af *g*, *h* og *i* á 1, 2 og 3 o. s. frv. Svona eltir hvor annan. Þegar töflur annars standa á reitum þeim, sem hinn þarf að flytja töflur sínar á, þá drepur hann þær. Ef töflur annars standa t. d. á 1-6, en töflur hins á 7-12 og sá fyrri fær tólfin, þá flytur hann töflurnar af 1-4 á 7-10, en tekur töflur mótstöðumannsins á burt, og eru þær úr sögunni. Þegar annarhvor á að eins eina töflu eptir, breytir hún um gang sinn. Hún geingur að eins í hornin og er kölluð *hornaskella*. Ef hornaskella stendur t. d. á 4, og sá sem hefir ráð yfir henni fær sex og ás, þá leikur hann henni á 6, 7 og 12. Það segir sig sjálft, að hornaskellan drepur að eins töflur þær, sem standa í hornunum. Ekki má heldur drepa hana ef hún stendur á milli tafna þeirra, sem mótstöðumaðurinn stýrir. Ef annar hefir t. d. töflur á 5, 6 og 7, en hinn hornaskellu á 1, og sá seinni fær ás, þá

St. Guðmund, and brings the vessel back full of water, which he pours into the lamp. Then they resume their places at the table, and the water burns like the brightest sperm-oil. All present praised God and the blessed bishop Guðmund, but he who had brought the water gained several games and thereafter ceased to play backgammon (*kvátruna*), thanking God who had given to him to win back that which he had lost in his thoughtlessness." This account is found in the particular saga of Guðmundur Arason, bishop of Hólar, written by the abbot Arngrímur. The same incident is told more concisely in the earlier volume of the admirable collection of the sagas of the Icelandic bishops (1858, p. 596): "An event took place at Hvammur in Breiðafjörður, when Þórður Sturluson dwelt there, which was that some men were playing backgammon (*kvotru*) at night, and one of them was called

leikur hann henni á 6, og drepur töflu þá sem stóð þar um leið. Ef hinn fær nú líka ás, þá verður hann að leika töflunni af 5 á 8 o. s. frv. Aptur er hornaskellan rèttdræp, þegar hún stendur fyrir framan töflur mótstöðumannsins. Seinast getur farið svo, að báðir hafi mist allar töflur sínar nema hornaskellurnar, og verður þá opt langur eltingaleikur með þeim, þangað til önnur getur drepið hina. Við það endar taflið. Jón Ólafsson nefnir *að elta stelpur*, og er það alt og sumt sem eg hefi séð um tafl þetta, nema hornaskella er nefnd í "Norðanfara" (xiii, 49). Þess er getið í "Annaler for nordisk Oldkyndighed" (1838-9, pp. 153-4) að viss tafla í vissu íslenzku teningatafli sè kölluð *hornaskækja*. Eg þekki ekki nafnið, en þykir líklegast að hèr sè átt við hornaskellu. Hallgrímur Pètursson minnist á tafl þetta í taflvísu sinni. Páll Bjarnarson segir mèr, að þar sem hann þekki til, sè teflt um einhverja nafngreinda stúlku, og sitji sá uppi með hana, sem geti drepið allar töflur hins. Af þessu er nafnið eflaust dregið.

Dánumannstafl eða *dándimannstafl*. Jón Ólafsson segir að tafl þetta dragi nafn af því, hvað það sè teflt alvarlega. Það sè teflt með þremur teningum, og sè fátíðara en hin töflin, sem hann getur um. Þegar sexin öll komi upp sè töflunum leikið um 18 sinnum 6 reiti. Þegar ás, daus og treja komi upp, sè það kallað *hælungi*; daus, treja og kotra, *fjósamaður*; treja, kotra og fimm, *litli dánumaður*, en kotra, fimm og sex, *stóri dánumaður*. Svo lítið talar Jón meira um tafl þetta, en það er hvorttveggja, að ekkert er á því að græða um ganginn í taflinu, og er svo það mjög ógreinilegt. Eg sleppi því þess vegna. Finnur biskup Jónsson drepur á dánumannstafl í orðabókarbroti sínu en ekkert að marki. Dánumaður er nefndur í taflvísu Hallgríms Péturssonar og þýðir eflaust sama þá og dánumannstafl. Loksins má geta þess að orðtækið: "Nú kastar átján yfir" (Jón Ólafsson, Guðmundur Jónsson) er dregið af tafli þessu.

Forkæringur. Jón Ólafsson nefnir forkæring, en lýsir honum ekki að marki. Hann segir að það sè allvandasamt tafl og mjög títt. Nafnið sè dregið af danska orðinu "Forkjæring," af því töflunum er leikið öfugt. Taflið kvað samt vera íslenzkt, þótt nafnið sé nokkuð dönskulegt, og Eggert Ólafsson tekur það beinlínis fram, að forkæringur þekkist ekki í útlöndum. Um *janstork* í forkæringi er áður getið. Í "Sigurhrósshugvekjum" sèra Jóns Jónssonar, Hólum 1797, stendur þetta á 33. bls.: "Guð tebler líkja sem Forkiæring við Maðenn í þessum Heime; því líkja sem þar er ymist upp aa Teningnum, so elldir her og ymsu" etc. Magnús Stephensen skopast að þessu í "Minnisverðum Tíðindum" (i., bls. 335), og segir að líklegt sè, þegar svo ójafnir tefli saman, að maðurinn verði mar á lánga múk. Eptir því hefir langi múkur átt sèr stað í forkæring. Loksins segir Björn Halldórsson að sögnin *að fortaka*, þýði "at trække Brikkerne til den yderste Linie i det Spil Forkiering." Þetta er alt sem eg hefi fundið um tafl þetta, því nú veit eg ekki betur, en það sè týnt. Sèra Hallgrímur Pètursson nefnir það og Bjarni skáld Þórðarsson nefnir það líka í vísunni:

Myrkra eykur mála þing,
Menn þegar orðum snúa;
Fjandinn leikur forkæring
Fyrir þá sem ljúga.

Loksins má geta þess að Björn Halldórsson þýðir *knèfafl* "brotspil," "tærningespil," en mèr er óljóst, hvort hann kallar öll teningatöfl knètafl, eða það er að eins eitt þeirra. — "Forkæring" is, of course, the German "Verkehren," the Danish "verkehr" ("forkæring") — the word, at least, coming from Denmark.

Hermundur, who was the principal person among them. Now it chanced that the oil gave out and they grumbled much about it, and bade the women to bring them more, but these refused to do it. Then said Hermundur: 'Let us take water from bishop Guðmund's well and try that.' This was done. Now the water burned like the best oil and they played so long as they wished." This briefer account is from the earlier saga of the bishop, which was the work of an anonymous author about 1320. The later saga, by the abbot Arngrimur, was originally composed in Latin, but was afterwards translated into Icelandic, and dates from the middle of the XIVth century. Arngrimur was abbot of the convent of Þingeyri from 1350 to 1360. He wrote the eulogistic poem from which we quote below, when he was a simple friar, which would be, of course, somewhat earlier. The miraculous game of backgammon is likewise referred to in this laudatory poem (*drápa*), which the friar composed on the same holy bishop of Hólar in 1345, which thus becomes a sure date in the history of the game in Iceland. The lines in which the consecrated well, the burning of the water and the playing at *kotra* (*kvátra*) are alluded to, are likewise published in the "Biskupasögur" (ii. p. 199):

Vættu þeir, er þurfa þóttust,
Þunnan hnjósk í vígðum brunni,
Því tókst þeim í einu eiki,
Elris grand, á kalda landi;
Vatnit brann, svá at skildist skötnum,
Skýrligt verk með krapti dýrum,
Tirsæll gaf því túngla stýrir
Til þess alt, hjá kvátru tafli.

Like chess, backgammon is of foreign origin and the author agrees with the declaration of Sigurður Guðmundsson, keeper of the Archæological Museum at Reykjavík: "Backgammon must be a French game as is indicated by the names applied to the points of the dice and by the words *mor* or *mar* and *jan*." The name of the game itself, as we shall see hereafter, is identical with one of the dice-numbers, which is additional evidence of the origin of this amusement. Backgammon has been played in Iceland from very early times, as may be seen from the story in the "Bishops' sagas." Sigurður Guðmundsson, the archæologist, asserts that we have the first trustworthy knowledge of backgammon in Iceland in the XIIth century. In the "Sturlungasaga," according to our author, we find in a passage the word *kotra* (old edition, 1817-20, iii., chap. 26), and again with an older orthography, *kvotra*, in the same work (v., chap. 38); and there is also another reference to the ace and deuce on the dice (v., chap. 31). The two mentions of the game in the "Biskupasögur" write the name *kvotra* (i. p. 596) and *kvátra* (ii., pp. 176-7). In the "Konráðssaga keisarasonar" (published in the "Fornsögur suðurlanda," Lund 1884, p. 83) is an allusion to *quatra:* and in the "Karlamagnús saga" occurs the word *kvátrutafl* (pp. 470, 486). But in none of these places is there any light thrown upon the method of play. We shall, however, cite the passages in question with sufficient fullness. Of the "Karlamagnús saga," being a romantic history of Charlemagne, there are two MSS, the first (designated as the *A* manuscript) from the third quarter of the XIIIth century, and the second (*B*) from the beginning of the XIVth. It is supposed to have been originally written about 1250. The older MS was edited by the Norwegian scholar Unger at Christiania 1860,

and from this edition (p. 470) we take these lines: "Now king Karlamagnús set out, and did not break his journey until he came to Miklagarður [Constantinople]. Half a mile from the city there was a garden of the king" [that is, of the Byzantine emperor]" with every kind of green thing in it. There the king found twenty thousand knights, clad in velvet, ermine and marten skin; some were playing at chess, some at backgammon (*sumir at kvátrutafli*); some were carrying goshawks and some had domesticated hawks sitting on their hands." The three italicized words are omitted in the B-manuscript, which, perhaps, may indicate that the copyist did not know the game. The other passage in the saga is here quoted from the same edition (p. 486): "The same day in which king Marsili's ambassadors came to meet Karlamagnús, he was sitting in a garden amusing himself, and his friends with him.... There were fifteen thousand Franks, all of whom sat under costly woven tents to keep themselves cool, and played at chess, but some at backgammon (*at kvátrutafli*), both young and old; and every other piece was of gold and every other of pure silver; and so were the squares [points] on the boards, every other one was gilt and every other inlaid with white silver." Those were indeed gorgeous days.

The next citation is from the story of Konrad, son of the emperor ("Konráðssaga keisarasonar"), a tale of chivalry published in the well-known collection of romantic sagas, "Fornsögur Suðurlanda," edited by Gustaf Cederschiöld, formerly of the Swedish University of Lund, but now of Gothenburg. We translate it in full as follows (Lund 1884, p. 83): "At this entertainment Konrad and Matilda were crowned and led to their bed. The wedding feast lasted for half a month; there were provided everywhere amusements; some played at chess or *hnettafl* or backgammon (*qvátru*); and arrangements were made in all directions for the joy and diversion of the people. The throngs were as great as at the greatest assemblies (*þingum*); and every man could amuse himself as it seemed to him best." Dr. Cederschiöld, in his introduction, states that the "Konráðs saga" was certainly written before the year 1300.

In regard to the Sturlunga, the greatest work relating to the history of Iceland, matters are not so satisfactory. The first passage cited by Olafur Davíðson is from the portion known as the "Guðmundar saga dýra" (chap. 26), written in 1270-1280 and relating to an incident which took place in 1198. Two of the characters, Kolbeinn and Guðmundur are said to have quarrelled "about chess and backgammon" (*tafl ok kotro*), but the second (Oxford) edition of this work substitutes the older and probably more correct reading, *tafl ok konur* ("chess and women"), although it must not be forgotten that *tafl* in early days was used for "table-game," that is either for chess, *hnefatafl* or backgammon (tables). The other citation of *kotra* (*kvotra*) from the Sturlunga made by our author is a wrong reference, since no mention of the game is to be found in chapter 38. The third excerpt from the Sturlunga (chap. 31), relating to dice, is from the "Íslendingasaga" (Oxford edition, I, p. 328). There is no allusion to a game proper, but only to the casting of dice, two characters agreeing to decide a question in that way —the text of which passage we have already reproduced. In an edition of the "Búalög," of about 1500, it is said that the cost of learning backgammon was eight ells of cloth, which would be about five crowns of our (Danish) money. Bishop Jón Arason and the poet, Hallgrímur Pèturssson, both men-

tion backgammon in their lyrics relating to games. Eggert Olafsson ("Reise igjennem Island," p. 50) likewise speaks of *kotra*, and some foreign writers who have treated of Iceland have copied what he says, but have corrupted the name of the game. Eggert Ólafsson asserts that backgammon is often played in the Kjósarsýsla. In a singular work entitled *Gandreið* ("Witches' ride"), preserved in manuscript among the archives of the Icelandic Literary Society (now in the National Library at Reykjavík), the author of which is Jón Daðason, rector at Arnarbæli, South-Iceland, (d. 1676), we are told (chap. 47) that Attalus Asiaticus (see V. d. Linde's "Geschichte," I, pp. 10-12 —the name of this inventor comes from the "Roman de la Rose"), was the first man "in Europe to play *kotra* and dice, and likewise, as some say *riddaraskák* ('knights' chess')", soon after the battle of Troy. This is all that the author of the "Skemtanir" has discovered in regard to the former popularity of the amusement in his country; he thinks that at the present time his countrymen hold backgammon in less esteem, and that it is played in very few districts. We ought perhaps to remark, in reference to the word *mar* or *mor*, cited in a preceding page as going to show that Icelandic backgammon is a French game, that no such term is to be found in connection with any variety of French backgammon.

There still exist in Icelandic old magical formulas to enable one to win at backgammon, just as there are others applicable to chess. One of them runs thus: "If thou wishest to win at backgammon, take a raven's heart, dry it in a spot on which the sun does not shine, crush it, then rub it on the dice." A similar fantastic counsel is that reported by Jón Árnason, the folk-lorist: "In order to win at *kotra*, take a tongue of a wagtail (the bird, *motacilla alba*), and dry it in the sun; crush and mix it afterwards with communion-wine, and apply it to the points of the dice, then you are sure of the game." The first of these formulas is found in a manuscript preserved in the archives of the Icelandic Literary Society. Another method of coming off conqueror at backgammon is mentioned by Jón Árnason, as follows: "The backgammon players (*kotrumenn*) should cry 'Olave, Olave, Harold, Harold, Erik, Erik.' The one wishing to win must write this formula with Runic letters and either bear it somewhere about him, or let it lie under the backgammon board, on his knees, while he is playing; besides that he must say the Lord's prayer in honor of St. Olave, the king." In his "Interpretations of ancient terms in the code of law called Jónsbók" ("Skýringar yfir fornyrði lögbókar," Reykjavík 1854, pp. 179-80) Páll Vídalín speaks of magical backgammon verses (*kotruvers*); and these must have been not uncommon at certain periods, for Árni Pètursson, who was burned in the presence of the Althing 1681 for witchcraft, confessed, before his death, among other things, that he had made use of *kotruvers* in his magic tricks. Many similar things are related in connection with dice, but they can hardly be considered as standing in any special relation with backgammon. But there are some proverbs which have their origin in the game. Of these may be cited: *Hann er kongur í kotru og kortspilum* (an alliterative adage signifying: "He is king at backgammon and cards");

Kotra og kanna
Gjöra margan fátækan manná,

(a couplet which may be rendered "A trictrac-board and a can make many a poor man"); *Löng er von í kotru* ("hope is long at backgammon"); *Nú*

vill ei upp nema dausinn (an exclamation of desperation, "nothing will turn up but the deuce"), but this may also be used of simple dice-play; *Ýmsir eiga í henni kotru,* "different people, different luck at backgammon." These proverbs are seldom made use of in our day, but there is no doubt that they were once in everybody's mouth. The last-mentioned is found, for instance, in a letter written by the famous Árni Magnússon about 1720. Árni Magnússon in this letter writes thus: "og hugga mig við, að ýmsir eiga í kotru."

Our author states that in the XVIIth century *kotra* was played for stakes, as may be noted in the poems of Stefán Olafsson (Copenhagen 1886, II, p. 112.), in which the poet's friend is obliged to pay a wager lost at backgammon. The little poem runs as follows:

Nú má Eyvör klá sèr kinn,
Í kotru misti hún hvolpinn sinn,
Af því hún er ómaginn
Ekki par fær Narfi minn.

Maðurinn tapa veðí vann,
Von er sigi geifla;
Ekki er gaman, anzar hann,
Við ómagann að tefla.

Olafur Davíðsson has discovered, in his researches, a drawing of a backgammon board such as was used in Iceland a century and a half ago. It is like those now seen. He then gives a representation of a modern Icelandic board, stating that he intends to describe the present method of play (see fig. 25). He states that folding-boards, with a chess-board on the outside of one cover and a morris-board on the outside of the other, and backgammon on the inside of both, are of frequent occurrence. He then mentions the number of men and dice employed, and remarks that he has never heard

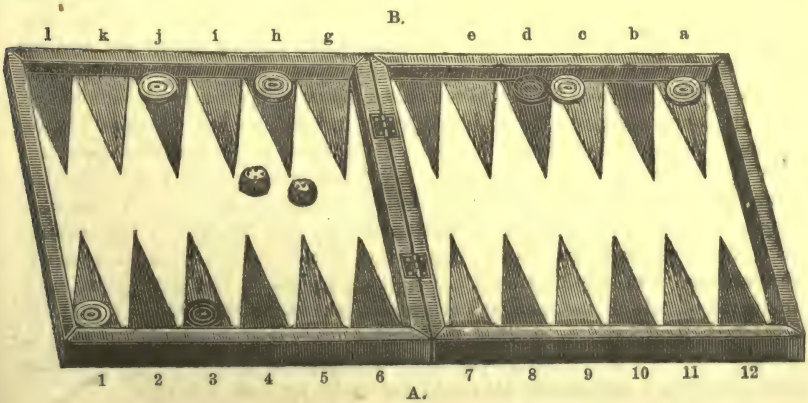


Fig. 25.

that *kotra* is sometimes played with twelve men, as is stated by the director of the Icelandic Archæological Museum. Boards are occasionally found, in which the points are not colored, but are formed by wooden strips tacked to the bottom of the board; on these the men are placed as it becomes ne-

cessary; while within the folded and closed board, the dice and men are placed when the game is over.

In beginning the game, the players sit each on his side of the board. They may be called A and B. Each of them has 15 pieces or men, each 15 having its own color. A places all his men on that point which is the farthest to his right in that side of his table which is remote from him, and which is called sometimes the "home table" (*heimaborð*). He is supposed to sit on the lower side of the table, and sets his men on *a*. B does the same. He sets his pieces on 1. Then each casts one of the dice, each in his own board (the division at his right). The one making the smaller cast plays first. A second cast, with both the dice, indicates what is the play, or how to move the pieces. The points on the dice are called *ás*, *daus* or *dís*, *treja*, *kotra*, *fimm* or *sex* according to whether 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6 turn up. Björn Halldórsson, in his dictionary, gives *sett* or *sètt* as the name of the highest number on the dice, but the ordinary numeral, *sex*, is, to say the least, much more common. When the two lowest dice-points are thrown they are usually spoken of as *ás og daus* (ace and deuce, or deuce-ace) but sometimes the thrower calls out: "Here comes *ásdís*" (*Ásdís* being also a female proper name). If the same number turns up on both dice at one throw, the double numbers are called *samvörp* ("doublets"), and they are spoken of as *ásar allir, trejur allar* ("aces all," "treys all") and so on, according to the number. This corresponds, as will be remembered, to the Swedish nomenclature. "Sixes all" are likewise called *tólfin* ("twelves"). Björn Halldórsson has this word, but in the "Flateyjarbók" (1380) the term *sex tvö* ("six two" that is to say, "two sixes") is employed in the passage which describes the casting of lots by the kings, St. Olaf of Norway and Olaf of Sweden, to decide who shall possess the little Swedish Isle of Hising (at the mouth of the Gautaelf, near Gothenburg). *Tólfin* is also used in some proverbs, as in *nú kastar tólfunum*, "this exceeds everything." He who has doublets has to play the turned-up number four times, if he can. Jón Olafsson says that some call it *ellefin*, when one die shows six and the other five. Play is so carried on that one or two men are moved as many points as are indicated by the points of the dice which turn up at each throw, and the count is made from the point on which the man stands. If, for example, A has four-deuce at the first throw, then he moves two men, one to *c* and the other to *e*. He may also naturally move one only to *g*, but the usual custom is to move at the beginning two pieces at the first throw, if this can be done, except when double sixes turn up. Then it is not possible to move more than one piece. Some say, however, that when this cast is thrown four men may be moved out, and all played to the sixth point, from the point on which the men are originally placed. Some also say that the adversary is allowed to capture them or *break them up* (*rífa upp*), as it is called, if he can do so before the other has himself spread them or broken them up. This however is also said not to be an Icelandic rule.

When A has thrown and moved, then B plays. Nothing prevents the player from placing men on a point already containing a man, one or more of his own pieces, but he may not allow two or more pieces to stand on the same point, which is called *reita* (*reitur* is a square on the chess board), until he has reached the uttermost point in that side of the table which is opposite him, but that is only allowable when he has moved five men

from the point originally containing his men. Then A can place men on the point *l*. Again it is permitted to him to make points wherever he will on the other side of the table, with the same conditions as have been stated. The men go namely from A's side over into B's side, from *l* to 1, 2 and so on to 12. Their whole course is therefore from *a* to 12, and that of B's men from 1 to *l*. Neither may play to a square on which his opponent has a man except it should be impossible to get past his line of squares; then he may "take up" or capture pieces on points wherever he can. If, for example, B has men on 1, *l*, *k*, *j*, *i*, and *h* then A cannot pass, not even if he should throw a six, but he may "take up" in accordance with the throw of his dice. Therefore one ought to beware of placing men on six squares, each beside the other. This custom is the most common rule in regard to the occupation of six squares in a row, but there is another rule which is very ancient in Iceland. According to that it is not permitted to "take up" men on any one of six successive points which are occupied, but the opponent is not permitted to move until some of the points are vacated, unless he has men beyond these six points, for over them it is impossible to get. This is called to *fortaka*. Mr. Sigurður L. Jónasson, who communicated this rule to the writer, says that the Rev. Árni Helgason (of Garðar), who was titular bishop of Iceland (d. 1858), always played in this way, and he was a proficient at backgammon. When the opponent again has only one piece on a point, then A may move his piece to that point, and take up the other, if the dice thrown will permit it. Then B must afterwards re-enter it (or them) in his home-board, but in that case the entering point is included in the count. If he throw, for instance, four and six, after two of his men have been captured, then he must enter them on four and six, otherwise he cannot play, until they have been entered. But often he must wait a long while for this, for it is not allowed to place captured pieces on those squares, on which he already has men, or on the squares which his opponent holds, except when he has more captured men than there are points vacant. In that case he may "break up" the points of his adversary in accordance with the casts of his dice. If it happen that the position of the men elsewhere is such that he cannot play the points he has thrown, then he must refrain from moving.

Thus the game goes on — with captures and hindrances to play. It is of great importance that each player place obstacles in the way of the other, and it is a good plan for this purpose, to hold many points in the board of the opponent, so that it will be more difficult for him to re-enter his captured men. Frequently, though, the desire to capture must be restrained, so that the adversary cannot break up one's points. It is regarded as desirable at backgammon to attain the *kverkatak* (literally, "throat-hold"), that is, to reach the extreme point in the home-board of the opponent and the point which is next to it. If A holds the points at 6 and 7, then he has the *kverkatak*.

Finally it is wise and proper to build up a row of points at the farthest end of that side of the table which faces the player, or in other words the "throwing-off" table, for it is regarded as unlikely that the opponent should get past one's men except occasionally, but the points in the row should not be six, for it is in that case impossible for the opposite player to get his men over, and he is then permitted to "break-up," or capture the obstructing points.

It is in this manner that there is the most likelihood of being able to make the opponent *jan*, or to *jan* him, and that counts for the most at backgammon; the other so-called *jan* is when he has more captured pieces than he can enter. The game ends with a *jan*, as is natural, and also with the throwing-off ("bearing") of all the pieces, which is the most common method of winning. The word *jan*, the author tells us, he first met in the poems of Eggert Olafsson ("Kvæði," Copenhagen 1832, p. 132):

> Skrumarar mundu verða *jan*
> Og haugbúans við húsavitjan
> Hræddir falla í stafi.

Jón Olafsson says about *jan*: "neutrum, indeclin. vocula peregrina"; he likewise says that the word occurs in some card-games, for example one called *marias* (a corruption of the French "mariage"). Jón Olafsson talks about *janstork* (*stork* = "defiance") in *forkæring* and *kotra*, but that is doubtless the same as *jan*, though he does not explain how the word occurs, whether one can say "to be or become *janstork*," or what? He states that, in other respects, he does not understand Jón Olafsson on this point, nor do those to whom he has submitted his remarks. He seems to wish to say that *janstork* is when one of the players does not get into the corner of the board, but the other one gets out ("cum quis non tantum vincula tabularum in ludo *forkæring* vel *kotra* assequitur, collusore altero feliciter evadente").

When all the pieces of a player have reached the "throwing-off" ("bearing") table, for example, when A's men hold the points 7-12, then he may proceed to take them out, that is to throw them off, but he may also move them, if he wishes, while there is an opportunity. The throwing-off consists in removing his pieces from the table, or board, and those which are thus thrown out have no farther connection with the game. In this process of throwing-out it is advantageous to cast doublets, for then four men at once may be removed. In throwing-off, the points are reckoned as when the men are entered. If A hold the points 9, 10, 11, and 12, and throw five and trey, then he must take the five from 9, but it is voluntary with him whether he move the trey to 12, or whether he take it off from 10. To speak generally, he who throws higher numbers than he can play, while he is throwing off, is bound to take off from his rear points, and then it often happens that his opponent can capture one or more of his men. When such a thing happens, he to whom the men belong is obliged to re-enter them in his home-board, just like other captured pieces, and may not proceed with the throwing-off until they have again arrived at the throwing-off table.

Jan and throwing-off (*úttekt*) are the most usual methods of winning at backgammon, but besides these there are "extra winnings" (*aukavinningar*), and these are 4: *meistari*, ("master"), *stutti múkur* ("little monk"—*múkur* being a popular corruption of *munkur*), *langi múkur* ("big monk") and *langi hryggur* ("big back"). *Meistari* consists in being able to place all the men on the furthermost point. If all the men of A stand on 12, then he has gained the *meistari*. If he have five men on each of the points 10, 11 and 12, then he has gained the "little monk." If he have succeeded in placing three pieces on each of the points 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12, then he has made the "big monk." "Big back" is three men on each of the points 7,

8, 9, 10 and 11. This rarely occurs, except when the opponent holds the point 12; one must then exert all his force to wrest this point from him, and then rather play for a simple "monk."

Better than nothing is to make a "half monk," and that is if a man can get his men in a required position by means of one of the dice numbers which he throws. B for example is playing for a "little monk," and has five men on 12, five on 11, four on 10 and one on 7. Now he throws, and gets six and trey. He plays only the trey, and thus has a "half monk." Some players, however, permit only one die to be thrown under these circumstances. If the proper numbers turn up, then it is a regular "monk." To all this the author, who, when he wrote, was a student at the University of Copenhagen, adds: "Backgammon is hardly played anywhere so frequently among Icelanders as among the Icelandic students at Copenhagen during the summer, but this is not an old custom and perhaps may not grow to be one [since the writer was at the university it has been largely superseded by chess]. We have the rule that he who has arrived at the point of getting a 'monk' may throw only one of his dice and make his 'monk' complete, if his throw allow of it. But if he do not succeed, then we permit him to throw the other die, and make his 'monk' a 'half,' if the dice will admit of that. But this is too much of a favour to the man playing for a 'monk.' It would doubtless be the right thing to allow him to throw both dice, or else one die once, so that, if he have the proper luck, his 'monk' will be complete." Some reckon "little *meistari*" among the "monks." It is "little *meistari*" when eight men are on the uttermost point and seven on the next. But, on the other hand, players generally do not consider this "little *meistari*" authorized. In contradistinction, however, *meistari* proper is sometimes styled "big *meistari*" (*stóri meistari*). It increases the value of each "winning," if the opponent has a captured man when the "winning" is gained; it is then said that the adversary is *mar* in "throwing-off," "monks," etc. The author informs us that the word *mar* is sometimes pronounced *mor*, but he has never heard it in that form. Neither form is found in any Icelandic dictionary. When A has thrown off all his men before B has succeeded in doing so, then he is allowed five, seven or thirteen "after-throws," or extra throws (the number differing probably in different tracts of the island), according to whether he aims at making "big monk," "little monk," or *meistari*, and these are good and valid if he gets them with the throws permitted. There are individual players who do not permit any after-throw, and without them "monks" are very rare. It is regarded as a greater honour to obtain one of the additional winnings than to succeed merely in "throwing-off." Of these *meistari* is foremost; then *stutti múkur;* then *langi múkur;* but *langi hryggur* is the least of all. The writer has heard the value of the different winnings given in numbers thus: "simple throwing off," 2; *langi hryggur*, 3; *langi múkur*, 5; *stutti múkur*, 7; *meistari*, 13; *jan*, 15. For *mar*, 2 is added to each "winning." For *mar*, at *stutti múkur*, for example, the count would be 9; for half a "monk" the count is half of that which is given to a "monk." It ought to be remarked that as "throwing off" is a low "winning" in comparison with a "monk," the player seldom begins to throw off before he has regarded the position sufficiently to see the impossibility of making a "monk." When one player has thrown off all his men, and it is plain that the other cannot make a

"monk," the game is closed. Some permit the one who was second player at the beginning of the game to have one more throw after he has thrown off his men, and if then the position be an even one, it is regarded as a drawn game (*jafnteflí*). This rule can only come under discussion at "throwing-off," for often one of the players has only two or four men when the other has completely thrown off. This rule is not in disagreement with that which permits no "after-throw" proper. Finally if more than one game of backgammon is played at a sitting, he has the first throw in a following game who has had, in the preceding one, a "throw-off" or a *jan*. The "monks" do not count in this regard.

Jón Ólafsson, the lexicographer (see p. 138, foot-note), mentions backgammon, but everything he says about it is confused and unintelligible, so that little credit is to be attached to it. He first talks about *kotungatafl* ("game of the crofter") and tells us that it is the same as *kotra;* and that its name comes from the fact that it is played with four knights (*riddurum*), or because it is foursided (*ferstrend*). In another place he remarks that in *kotungatafl* four knights are opposed to all the *peðjunum* (a corrupt orthography of the dative plural of *peð*, the Icelandic word for "pawn"). Nowhere else is there any account of knights or pawns in connection with *kotra*, a fact which at once excites a grave suspicion of the dictionary-maker's intelligence. In another place the same writer speaks of *kvenn-kotra* ("feminine backgammon,") which he says some call *kotra*. But he does not explain the game. Besides these he mentions *alkotra* ("every body's backgammon.") Olafur Davíðsson has found none of these names elsewhere, and therefore has nothing to report in regard to them. Finally Jón Olafsson states that some call *kotra* "English tictac," and also "forkæring." Further on he remarks that the different games at backgammon are these; 1. *að elta steipur*, 2. *ofanfellingartafl*, 3. *forkæringur*, 4. *goðatafl*, 5. *Ólafs kongs tafl*. This classification it is impossible to agree to, for *kotra*, as it is played now, and as it was in all probability played at that time, bears no resemblance, for example, to *goðatafl*. These games the author proceeds to say, he considers separately, not regarding any of them as *kotra* proper. There is, though, one of the games which Jón Olafsson alludes to under *kotra*, which rightly belongs there, and that is *piprjáll*, for it is nothing but a modified *kotra*. The difference consists in the treatment of the doublets. When double sixes (*tólfin*) occur at *kotra* the six is played four times, but in *piprjáll* the sixes are played first, then fives, then fours, then threes, then deuces and last of all aces. On the other hand when aces are thrown they are played first, then deuces, then threes, then fours, then fives, then sixes. When fours, treys, or deuces are thrown they are played successively downwards, that is, aces last, but when fives are thrown they are played upwards, that is, only fives and sixes. This is all the difference. *Piprjáll* was also called *koprjáll* (both terms being, so far as we can learn, untelligible nonsense), and we can thus understand how the expression "Kopar í alin" gets into the "taflvísa" of Hallgrímur Pètursson. Another Icelandic writer thinks that *pipóla* (whether it be the name of a game or a dance) is the same as *piprjóla*, and should be related to *piprjáll*. It is proper to state, before this subject is ended, that Jón Olafsson, under *kotra* calls *ofanfellingartafl* simply *ofanfelling*. Under *kotra* also he likewise treats *piprjáll*, *færingartafl*, *dándimannstafl*, etc. as games at *kotra*, but under *tafl* he

regards them as special table-games. In general he seems inclined to consider as varieties of *kotra* everything played on tables and with dice (compare the travels of Eggert Ólafsson, i. p. 50); but according to this definition *Ólafs kongs tafl* cannot be a *kotra* game, for that is played without dice, as has before been stated.

Ofanfelling or *ofanfellingartafl*. This game is played on a backgammon board, the players being two. Each one sets two men on every point in that division of the board which faces him at his right hand. One has the black men, and the other the white. First of all the dice are thrown to decide who shall play first. He who has the greatest number of points, at one throw, casts the dice again and moves the uppermost lying men on the points down beside the lower man, nearer the small end of the point, in accordance with the dice-points thrown. If he throw, for example, six and deuce, then he moves down the uppermost men on the six and deuce points. If he throw doublets, then he can only move down one man, but he has the right to another throw, even if he cast several doublets one after the other. The other player now throws, and proceeds in the same way, after which they take turns. If a dice-point turn up corresponding to a point on the board on which the upper man has already been moved down, then the throw does not count. When either or both players have brought down all their men, they then move them up again, that is place each again on the lower, or underlying man, that is to say where they were originally placed, moving, of course, in accordance with the throws of the dice. When all the men have been again doubled up, then they are thrown off, an operation which takes place exactly as at backgammon. The player wins who has first thrown off all of his pieces. Jón Olafsson mentions this *ofanfellingartafl*, but does not explain it. Sigurður Guðmundsson also touches upon it. Hallgrímur Pètursson names it. The word *ofanfelling* signifies "felling down," or "lowering down." It will be evident to those who have read the preceding pages that the simple game here described is identical with the one still known in France under the name of "les dames rabattues," and which, as Hyde tells us, used to be played in England, where it was called "doublets" or the "queens' game." The surmise that it is one of the most ancient forms of backgammon, to which one of the writers we have cited has given utterance, may, therefore, be correct, if we may judge by its long existence and practice in Iceland.

Að elta stelpur. This game (its name is a rather vulgar one, signifying "pursuing wenches") is also played on the backgammon board. The players are two. One of them has at his disposal six white men and the other six black men; they are arranged as in *ofanfellingartafl* except that only one man is placed on each point. The first player is decided by the throw of the dice, the winner then throwing again. If six turn up, he moves the two furthermost men forward before the others to the left, and does the same if doublets turn up, except double sixes, for they give the right to move four men. Besides this, he may throw again after all doublets. If he throw an ace, then he moves one. No other throws count except six, ace and doublets. Then the second player casts the dice and proceeds in the same manner, and so on by turns. When the furthermost piece of either player has arrived at the end of the half table, then he moves the aftermost piece or pieces over across the board to the nearest point in the other half of the table,

according to the throw of the dice. If the men of either player are standing, for example on the points *g-l* in the left backgammon table (see fig. 25), and the throw is six-ace, then he moves the pieces on *g*, *h*, and *i* to 1, 2 and 3, etc. Thus each one chases the other. When pieces of his opponent are situated on those points to which the player must move his men, then he captures them. If the pieces of one are placed, for example, on 1-6, while the pieces of the adversary are on 7-12, and the former throw double sixes, then he moves his men from 1-4 to 7-10, removing from the board his opponent's men, which thereafter, being captured, have nothing more to do with the game. Whenever either player has only one man left its move undergoes a change. It can be played only into the corners, and it is called a *hornaskella* (*horn*="corner," *skella*="rattle," "rattler"). If *hornaskella* for instance, is on the point 4, and he to whom it belongs throw six-ace, then he plays it to 6, 7 and 12. As a matter of course the *hornaskella* captures only those men which stand in the corners. Moreover the piece itself cannot be taken when it stands between men of the adversary.

If one player have, for example, men on 5, 6 and 7, and the *hornaskella* of the other player is on 1, and the latter throw an ace, then he plays it to 6 and captures the man which previously stood there. If the other player now throw also an ace then he is obliged to play his man from 5 to 8, etc. Again the *hornaskella* is duly liable to capture when it stands in advance of the adversary's men. Finally, it may happen that both the opponents have lost all their pieces except the two styled *hornaskella*, and then often succeeds a long, chasing game until the one can capture the other. With that the game ends. This includes all that the writer has been able to find in regard to this game except a casual mention of *hornaskella* in the journal "Norðanfari" (1874, XIII, p. 49), where a letter constantly carried about in the postman's bag and not reaching its owner is compared to a *hornaskella*. It is stated in the "Annaler for nordisk oldkyndighed" (1838-9, pp. 153-4) that a certain piece, in a certain Icelandic dice-game, is called *hornaskœkja*. The author does not know this word, but thinks it likely that it is simply a case of confusion arising from its resemblance to *hornaskella*. Hallgrímur Pèturssson has an allusion to this game in his frequently cited "Taflvísa."

Dánumannstafl or *dándimannstafl*.—Jón Olafsson asserts that this variety of backgammon gets its name from the seriousness or earnest propriety with which it is played. The words *dánumaður*, *dándismaður*, or *dándismaður* (the Danish "dannemand") signify "gentleman," or literally "excellent man." The game is played with three dice, and is more infrequent than any treated of by the old lexicographer. We do not know the position of the men at the beginning, but very likely they are placed as in the more common sorts of backgammon. When double sixes turn up the men may be moved 18 points. When ace, deuce and trey are thrown, the position (or the cast?) is styled *hœlungi* ("all-in-a-row," the noun literally meaning a "young bird following another"); when the dice yield deuce, trey and four the position is known as *fjósamaður* ("cowherd"); when trey, four and five, the name is *litli dánumaður;* and when four, five and six, they form the *stóri dánumaður* (*stóri*=big). Jón Olafsson has something more to say under this head, but it is not of such a character as to give any idea of the mode of play, and is otherwise very obscure. The writer, therefore, refrains from the endeavor to report it. Bishop Finnur Jónsson

(1704–1789), in his fragmentary lexicon, alludes to *dánumannstafl*, but says nothing worthy of note. "Dánumaður" is cited in the *taflvísa* of Hallgrímur Pèturssón, and is there doubtless intended for *dánumannstafl*. Finally it may be stated that from this game is derived the phrase: *Nú kastar átján yfir* (resembling a dice term already quoted)—átján, "eighteen" referring to the three sixes thrown—which is found twice in the "Grýlukvæði" of the poet Stefán Olafsson (edition of 1885, i, 230–231):

Förumanna flokkarnir
Og kerlinga krans,
Þó nú taki átján yfir
Umferðin hans.
Þó nú taki átján yfir,
Ef það er satt,
Að þar sè komin Grýla,
Sem geta öngvir satt.

The two concluding lines of the first stanza may be rendered: "Though now the vagrant-round goes beyond everything."

Forkæringur is included in Jón Ólafsson's vocabulary of games, but his explanations throw little light upon its character. He tells us that it is a very difficult diversion, but one frequently indulged in. The name, as Olafur Davíðsson thinks, comes from the Danish word "*forkjæring*" ["verkeheren"], as it is written in the latest Danish orthography, *forkæring* (compare the Danish "forkert," meaning "perverted," "up-side-down," "topsy turvy"), because the pieces are played, as it were, in the wrong direction. The game is said to be Icelandic, although the name is a Danism; and Eggert Olafsson declares out and out that *forkæringur* is not known in foreign countries ("Reise igjennem Island" i, p. 50). Of *janstork*, in this game, we have already treated. In the "Sigurhrósshugvekjur" ("Religious meditations") of the Reverend Jón Jónsson (Hólar 1797, p. 33) we find the phrase: "Guð tebler lijka sem *Forkiæring vid Mañenn i þessum Heime*," "God plays as at forkjæring with man in this world." Magnús Stephensen, in his "Minnisverð tíðindi" (1797, i., p. 335), scoffs at this phraseology and says that it is most likely that, when two such unequal persons play together, man suffers a "big monk" with *mar*. According to this, if taken literally "*forkjæring* must have had its "*stóri múkur*." Finally, Björn Halldórsson asserts that the verb *fortaka* means "to move the men to the outermost line in the game of *forkiering*." This, our author tells us, comprises all that he has discovered in regard to this game, which seems to him to have now disappeared from Iceland. Hallgrímur Pèturssón names it, and so does the poet Bjarni Þórðarsson, in a lyric:

Myrkra eykur mála þing,
Menn þegar orðum snúa,
Fjandinn leikur *forkæring*
Fyrir þá sem ljúga.

This may be freely translated: "When people are playing falsely with their words, so that they make the ambiguity of their speeches increase, the devil is playing *forkæring* for the liars." Of course the reader will notice that this game, so far from being Icelandic, is the French "revertier," the German "verkehren," or "verkehrspiel," which latter name is given to it in

the three editions of the "Dansk spillebog" from 1786 to 1829. The name used in Icelandic is therefore purely Danish, or a Danish rendering of the German.

Besides the games already described, Jón Olafsson briefly alludes to two foreign ones, *tiktak* and *trokodil*. The writer we are summarizing says that both are probably no longer practiced in Iceland; the former is of course, *trictrac*, the other being *toccategli*. These, likewise, are described with tolerable fullness in the Danish "Spillebog," just cited, in all its editions. The two are treated as one game in the text, the differences being explained in the notes. The matter seems to be taken in a nearly or quite complete form from the "Neueste anleitung wie die trictrac- und toccategli-spiele recht und wohl zu spielen" (Nürnberg 1773), in which the games are also treated together by comparison. The odd word *trokodil* is a humorous corruption of "toccategli" or "tokkadille" in imitation of the name of the animal, which is in Icelandic *krókodill;* the Icelanders are fond of such verbal fantasticalities, as they may be called.

The Icelandic name of backgammon, *kotra,* is undoubtedly derived from the French *quatre* (or the Latin *quatuor*) and, with almost equal certainty, directly from that word in its use to represent one of the dice-numbers. It is possible that the Icelanders were struck by this number as being the first one having a very different form from their own. They had *ás* ("ace"), *daus* ("deux," "deuce"), *treja* ("trois," "trey"), each one not unlike the foreign names, but *quatre* (also much used in English of old) was noticeably dissimilar to *fjórir;* or the regularity of the four-side of the die, with its four points or dots symmetrically arranged in the four angles, may have struck the old Icelanders. It is not very improbable therefore that this term (so common, like all the dice-numbers, in backgammon, in announcing throws, both singles or doublets) may have been conferred on the game. But, on the other hand, it must not be forgotten that similarly derived names, "size-ace" in English, "Seis, dos e as" in Spanish, "Doublets" in English and so on, have been elsewhere conferred on varieties of backgammon. Moreover, it is somewhere stated that there was in mediæval Germany a game styled "quater," and another one, bearing precisely the same title and perhaps allied to it, in England, still played in the XVIIth century. But proper investigation might easily throw much light on this question of etymology.

What seems without doubt is that *kotra* (*kvátra*)—the name and the game—reached Iceland nearly contemporaneously with chess—or perhaps shortly after. An argument for the precedence of chess is that *tafl* (that is "tables") came in time to be applied to chess and never to *kotra.* The latter represented the "tables" of mediæval literature, and it would be natural that its title should be conferred on backgammon rather than on chess. It is noteworthy that we have seen, in these last pages, in a fairly early romantic saga, the names of *tafl* (chess), *hnettafl* and *kotra* cited in juxtaposition, showing that the writer of the saga had no doubt of their distinct character. Nor does *kotra*, least of all of the games which have been suggested as the real *hnefatafl*, bear any resemblance to the saga game, so far as it has been described to us. We may therefore almost take it for granted that we have not yet discovered the true *hnefatafl.*

Having deviated from the original design of limiting the scope of the present work to the subject of chess in Iceland—its history in that country and its treatment in Icelandic literature—we take the opportunity, in closing the first volume, of giving very summarily the principal conclusions, which may be drawn from the notes we have gleaned in regard to different table-games, their supposed or probable origin, and the manner and date of their introduction into Iceland. It must again be repeated that what has been said in reference to the rise, early development and subsequent spread of these games (saving only chess) is wholly based upon investigations now in great part first made, and hence necessarily incomplete and unsatisfactory. An exception to this sweeping assertion of novelty must, however, be recorded in the case of the labours, admirable for their day, of the learned Thomas Hyde—the outcome of which may be studied in his "Historia nerdiludii, hoc est dicere, trunculorum; cum quibusdam aliis Arabum, Persarum, Indorum, Chinensium, & aliarum gentium ludis" (Oxonii 1694), being the second volume of his remarkable work, "De ludis orientalibus." A certain amount of merit is likewise to be assigned to some of the many slight treatises on Greek and Latin games, by archæological students, usually written in Latin, from the times of the Scaligers down to the end of the XVIIth century, (see p. 122, *note*), but the ignorance of their authors in regard both to the practical character of games in general and of the games of the Eastern world in particular greatly affects the value and utility of these *opuscula*. In many cases, too, their information would doubtless, if carefully estimated, be of only a negative weight so far as the games in which we are interested are concerned. But in this entire field, belonging alike to the folklorist and the historian of civilization, and demanding the services of linguistic investigators possessing great accuracy, patience and shrewdness, there is still much to be done. We have, as stated, confined ourselves wholly to table-games, that is those which are played on a board or other surface, on which some peculiar design is drawn. But even this branch of the subject admits of many subdivisions, such as line-games, and games of squares or points, games practised with dice and without, and so on. Historically, the important questions to be decided, in the case of all these games, are the place and time of their origin; the method of their development; and the manner, date and direction of their extension into various parts of the world. This last involves, naturally, explanations of the relationship, if any, existing between games, more or less similar in character, practiced in regions remote from each other. But to all scholars devoting themselves to any of these subjects a thorough practical knowledge of the games they are examining, in all their modern history and present state, is absolutely essential. The following final notes are set down with diffidence, and the reader will easily enough see that much work is yet required to make the indefinite results attained definite, and that many of the conclusions drawn are quite likely, in the course of time and the progress of research, to be greatly modified:

1. *Chess*, as generally maintained, had its origin in India at a far distant period. The first documentary contemporary evidence of its existence (this being the only trustworthy historical testimony) dates from about the year 600 after Christ, at which period it is thereby shown to have been familiarly known to the inhabitants of the provinces of Persia adjoining the

Indian frontier. Beyond that time all statements in regard to its chronology, in that portion of the world at least, are at present the merest surmises. It would seem that it spread at an early day to China and Japan, although there are not lacking writers who contend that the reverse was the case, and that the game really owes its origin to the former of these empires, whence it extended to India. But this is not the accepted theory, yet the records and authorities of the Farthest East still await a thorough and intelligent examination. Chess made its entry into Europe at widely distant points and (if we are to judge only by contemporary evidence) nearly simultaneously. These points are in particular Spain and the Byzantine empire, lying at the two extremities of the Mediterranean. The two earliest mentions of it in both regions occur in the eleventh century—in the case of Spain, in wills bequeathing costly chessmen and chessboards, and in the case of the Eastern empire, in the Greek "Alexias," a life of her father, the emperor Alexius Komnenus (1081-1118), by the princess Anna Komnena; but equally early is the first recorded date in Italy, namely in a letter of Cardinal Damiano, written as it would appear, in the year 1061. Historians of chess, in spite of the occurrence of these earliest allusions to chess at nearly the same epoch in three different lands, usually regard Spain as the chief gate, through which the game made its entry into the European world; this is partly, perhaps, by reason of its early invasion and long occupation by a people of Arabic race and speech, and the subsequent intimate intercourse of these foreign conquerors with their Christian neighbours; yet it should not be forgotten, in this connection, that a portion of Italy, that is to say the island of Sicily, was also held by Arabic (commonly styled Saracenic) invaders, and ruled by Arabic princes, from the middle of the IXth to the middle of the XIth century. Yet in the cases of Spain and Byzantium we know, by abundant philological and other evidence, that chess reached them directly and immediately from the Arabs; as to Italy this is not clear. At any rate it was from Spain and Italy that the game passed to the central and western regions of Europe. On its march westward from its early Indo-Perso-Arabic home it underwent various modifications, just as it did on its march eastward from India to the shores of the Pacific ocean. Chess came to Iceland not later than the latter half of the XIIth century, certainly by the way of England, and probably from the English cathedral or conventual schools (see pp. 7-9).

2. *Draughts* is a greatly simplified chess, and is hence to be considered as having its direct and sole origin in that game. It was apparently devised in Spain (see pp. 92-97) during or before the XIIIth century. It had already reached England in the XIVth century and could not well have been known in Iceland much before the XVth, probably somewhat later. It came to the island — to judge by the name given it — possibly from Scotland, but more likely from Norway or Denmark, although it might likewise have made its way thither from Germany during the time of the trade carried on, especially after the beginning of the XVth century, between Iceland and the Hanseatic cities. Icelandic writers have, as yet, given very little attention to the story of draughts.

3. *Morris.* — This game, as now ascertained (see p. 255, *note*), followed the track of chess, coming, so far as Europe is concerned, from the Arabic world. It, too, seems to have existed, at least in its simplest form, among

the remote populations of easternmost Asia (see Hyde, ii, p. 211), but at how early a time cannot at present be surmised. The earliest positive date in its history belongs to the tenth century of our era, at which time it was practiced, with chess and backgammon, in the cities of Arabia (see p. 255, *note*). It was, demonstrably, a familiar sport in Spain before the XIIIth century, in France in the earliest years of the XIVth, and in England before the middle English period (1200-1500) had completed half its course. Still earlier dates in all these lands are not unlikely to turn up as the result of further research. As its Icelandic name (*mylna*) proves, it must have been carried to the northern island, not by way of France and England, as was the case with chess, but originally from Italy by the way of Germany, or of Germany and continental Scandinavia. This occurred doubtless several generations after the arrival of chess.

4. *Fox-and-geese.* — Our investigations lead us to suggest that this certainly very ancient diversion may possibly be a survival of one of the several line-games of the Romans (see p. 148). There is no mention of it either in the codex of King Alfonso or in the treatise on Oriental games of Hyde; and we have found no trace of it outside of Europe and its colonies. That it bore the name of *vulpes* in the works of Latin writers in a very early period of the Middle Ages, and possibly in a very late period of the Low Latin age, is a supposition largely founded on the mention of that word, as the appellation of a game, by John of Salisbury (1110-1182). Within the last two or three generations efforts have been made to transform into a fortress the upper arm of its cross, and to confer on it a new nomenclature. These attempts may have originated in a Catholic country, in which the cruciform figure was thought to be improperly employed for a mere sport. The Icelandic title ("fox-chess") does not throw much light on the question of its age in that country, except as an indication that its introduction was posterior to that of chess. It suggests, too, that its source may have been England; geese are and have been so rare in Iceland, although foxes are common enough, that the English name could hardly have been rendered in its fullness; but a similar statement may be made in regard to the titles given it in other lands. In considering the provenance of the Icelandic game, we find certain notable coincidences between it and the Swedish form of the game, reminding us of the peculiarities characterizing the most common Icelandic and the most common Swedish varieties of backgammon (see p. 316). The Swedish game is styled *räfspil* ("fox-game") virtually equivalent to *refskák;* while the minor pieces are called in Sweden *får* ("sheep") and in Icelandic *lömb* ("lambs") — quite unlike the nomenclature of the same game in other parts of Scandinavia. Both in the XVIIIth and XIXth centuries Icelandic writers spoke of *refskák* as the most familiar of all Icelandic table-games; the same remark would have been true also in nearly the whole of that period, if used of fox-and-geese in any English-speaking land. Outside of the cities, at any rate, it would not have been easy to find many youths unacquainted with it, either in Great Britain or the United States.

Backgammon. — Many doubts, probabilities and possibilities obscure the story of the genesis and early period of this game. These may perhaps be partly solved or settled by means of events not unlikely to occur within a reasonable period. One such event would be the publication of the nume-

rous diagrams of popular table-games found within the last few years, more or less rudely incised or scratched on the pavements of porticos, the steps of public edifices, pedestals of monuments, in excavations made in the Roman forum and elsewhere. Another important source of information would be opened by the discovery and publication of special Arabic treatises on the game, such as that ascribed to el-Adlis ("Kitab el nard"), living in the IXth century, alleged author likewise of the first Arabic book on chess. His work should have had its successors in the following centuries; for as late as the XVIth, a functionary of the chief mosque at Aleppo, who is called by Hyde Muhammed Sokeiker, a native of Damascus, composed a monograph on the superiority of chess when compared with nard. It must be borne in mind that there have been literally no studies in Arabic literature, prosecuted with especial reference to nard, except those of Hyde, whose facilities were few and limited in comparison with those afforded to the student of the present day [180].

Let us style the first period in the history of this game the Asiatic (or pre-Asiatic?), of which we can present the following rough data:

1. Many Latin writers, some of them as early as the first and second centuries of our era, allude to a game, frequently practised in their day, the most usual name of which was *duodecim scriptorum* (*ludus*), or the game of "twelve lines." The board (see p. 174) represented twelve lines (or points) on the side of the board next to each player, and the game was played with the aid of dice. These are the two certain features of this Roman diversion,

[180] At the risk of some iteration we shall venture to point out here very briefly some of the essential lines of investigation in any endeavor to increase our knowledge of the source and early history of backgammon, and incidentally of other games treated in the present volume: 1. A careful study of the tracts of ancient Greek and Latin games, of which we have given only a partial list (pp. 121-122); and a study of such diagrams of Greek and Latin boards (see p. 174) and of such specimens of men or pieces, as may exist in public and private archæological collections — the result of the extensive excavations and frequent "finds" of later times. 2. A patient and comparative study of the so-called "trial" codices (except the portions relating to chess), which are enumerated in the works of Von der Lasa and Van der Linde (especially in the "Zur Geschichte und Literatur" of the former and the "Quellenstudien" of the latter) and which are preserved in the public libraries of the Escurial near Madrid, Rome, Florence, Paris, Montpellier, London and other cities, of these, two no longer rest where they did when seen by the writers just mentioned — the Barberini "Civis Bononiæ" MS having passed from the Barberini library into the Vatican, while the beautiful Fountaine codex became, at the late sale of the Fountaine library, the property of London's chief dealer in old books (Mr. Quaritch), who perhaps, still holds it; it must be added that no attempt has ever been made, by any investigator, to examine, with any care or intelligence, the non-chess portions of any of these wonderful literary monuments. 3. A very close examination of the second volume of Thomas Hyde's "De ludis orientalibus" (1694), and of the authorities he there cites; of both volumes a new edition — with notes and other literary apparatus — is greatly needed, and it is hoped that, out of regard to the memory of one of Oxford's great scholars, the Oxford University press will some day give the world not only this reprint but a well-edited English translation as well. 4. After Hyde, a search for Persian and Arabic MSS relating to nard in the great European and Asiatic collections; of course this will be a huge task, but it can be accomplised far more easily now than in Hyde's day, and he who sets about it is sure to receive the willing aid of many learned orientalists in all countries; even a clearly expressed circular letter to librarians would be apt to lead to interesting results — so little has been done in this direction. 5. The perusal of the numerous essays of Karl Himly, relating to the table-games of Eastern Asia, all admirably written, and published, during the last few years, chiefly in the "Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft" and the "Deutsche Schachzeitung". The author spent several years as a member of the German consular service in the Far East, and made excellent use of the great opportunities he enjoyed in that position.

which have come down to us. Some archæologists assert that a game resembling it, or identical with it, existed in ancient Greece. Both the Greek and Roman games are mentioned under varying appellations, and the discussion of them and of other classic sports of the same character, gave rise to a considerable erudite literature (to which we have alluded) some two or three centuries ago. But there are as yet no noteworthy treatises, prepared in the light of modern exploration and research, which relate to this theme.

2. There exists a tract written in Persian (in the Pahlavī character), probably in the VIIth or early part of the VIIIth century, giving an account of the arrival of chess in Persia, to which it had been brought from India, and also of the transmission of a game styled *ardechshīr* from Persia to India (see p. 169). This latter game was played with fifteen white and fifteen black men, on a board or table, and with the help of dice. About the year 800 an Arabic writer ascribes the invention of both this game and chess to India, and informs us additionally that the former was played on a board of twelve points, or houses. In 947 an authoritative Arabic historical cyclopædia corrects the statements of the preceding writer, and states that the game (properly called *nard*) was the invention of a Persian king. In the Xth-XIth century the Persian poet, Firdūsi, in his great epic, reproduces the original legend of the Pahlavī tract with some amplifications (see p. 170). Thus a game answering the description of our backgammon (played with the assistance of dice on a board having twelve points and demanding the use of fifteen men by each player) was known in Persia as early as the VIIth century, and less than two centuries later was mentioned by arabic writers.

3. But apparently the oldest known allusion to this Persian game yet discovered is that in the Hebrew "Talmud" — that monument of Jewish lore and tradition — but portions of which were completed before the middle of the VIth century. In the "Megara," or later section of the "Talmud," we are told of a game bearing the name of *nerdshīr*, and there seems to be little doubt that this is the equivalent of the Arabic *nerd* (*nard*). The date we thus obtain, would be one involving a notable period of time before the earliest literary reference to chess — nearly one century at least, and possibly more than two centuries, for the compilation of the "Megara" was carried on through portions of the IVth-VIth centuries. This fact does not, however, render it at all probable that *nard* is really older than chess; but it gives another and a more northwesterly locality to the Persian nard at a very early date — a locality, too, which is nearer the Mediterranean. The "Megara" was compiled, partly in Palestine and partly in Babylonia.

4. What, if any, were the relations between the old Roman or Greco-Roman backgammon-like games and the old Persian game of a similar character? In reference to this query it is wise to remember that an ancient legend attributes the invention of dice to the Lydians, which if it mean anything, signifies only that the most ancient peoples of the Mediterranean received these gaming implements from Asia Minor or the parts adjacent. They might also have received from that same region, or, in other words from that great tract south of the Black sea, including the valley of the Euphrates-Tigris, in which so many of the world's very oldest nations originated and ran their careers, any games with which dice were connected.

5. There is supposed to be a subtle signification to most ancient historical myths. It seems quite likely that the Pahlavī-Firdūsi legend, relating

to the genesis of chess and nard, simply means that chess came to Persia from the south (India), and that nard went to India from the north (Persia or elsewhere). Even in days very far back a Greek game, or a game from the eastern shores of the Mediterranean, might have made its way to Persia by the travelled commercial paths, or by means of the great military expeditions like that of Alexander the Great in the IVth century before Christ; or it might have been brought back to Persia by the return of the Persian expeditions against Greece at a still earlier date. The conclusion, perhaps a fantastic one, to which all this leads, is that the true birth-place of the game which we know as backgammon, may have been the European or Asiatic lands bordering on the more easterly portion of the Mediterranean — the territory, in short, lying between the Tiber and the Tigris, which at earlier or later periods was overrun by the armies, dotted by the colonies and penetrated by the commerce of Greece and Rome. Its character might have been more or less changed when it had reached Persian or other distant regions, just as chess has undergone various modifications in its migrations from the east to the west.

The next period of backgammon may be styled the mediæval European period, or that of the game of tables. In relation to this stage of its history, from which the modern era of the game is developed historically, we may add to our present notes the following ones:

6. The remaining notable question, not of easy solution, concerns the real relations between the *nard* of Perso-Arabia and the *tables* (*ludus tabularum*) of the European Middle Ages. It is true, as already stated, that, in the existing state of our knowledge, there is nothing of strict historical evidence, nothing in the names of the various games played in the Middle Ages, or in more recent times, on the backgammon board, nor in the technical terminology employed in those games, which indicates any connection with the Perso-Arabic game. We cannot, therefore, rely on philology to aid us here, as we can in the cases of chess and morris. Nevertheless the description, not very detailed, it is true, of the old Asiatic game, when compared with the description, still vaguer indeed, of the *duodecim scripta*, must lead to the opinion that the modern European backgammon far more nearly resembles the former than the latter. It is not improbable, as we have learned elsewhere, that when the Saracenic and Moorish conquests brought nard, as they brought chess to the Mediterranean lands, new technical terms were borrowed from those already in use in a game, or in games of a similar character. This would be more likely, perhaps, were the game from the far east first established or known in Italy. This is shown by the fact that morris retained its Arabic name in Spain, but on reaching Italy received a Low Latin name — that of a Latin counter, or coin, of the same form as the men or pieces with which it was played (see pp. 111 and 119). On the Latin *duodecim scripta* board the lines or points were arranged in a different manner, so that it had the look of a single board (see p. 174), but on the nard they were so drawn as to give the appearence of a double board, or of two boards joined vis-a-vis together. This may account for the use of the plural of the Latin *tabula* ("table"), that is *tabulæ*, as the title of the newly introduced diversion. The employment of this word, in an age in which the Latin language was still in such general use in its original home, is a strong argument in favor of the belief that nard first naturalized itself, on crossing

the Mediterranean, on the soil of Italy. If that should ever prove to be the case it might affect the relations, so far as the game of tables is concerned, supposed to exist between the earliest Spanish and the earliest Italian documents treating of the game. We might then consider that the Alphonsine MS borrowed much of its information from the North Italian writers, or their predecessors. What might strengthen that opinion would be the peculiar character of many of the romance technical terms used in all those early writings. But many of these suggestions are merely surmises, which at best can only be regarded as possibilities; much further investigation is needed before any of them assume the character of probabilities.

7. Whether the Asiatic game, then, were first introduced by the Arabic invaders into Italy or into Spain, its name became *tables* — a generic term including all the varieties played with the same implements (board, men and dice). Spain, Portugal, France and England adopted the original plural form, simply vulgarising it (tablas, tabolas, tables); Italy and some other countries chose to give it in their vernaculars a singular form. Derivatives of tabulæ (in its sense as the title of the mediæval nard) are found in all the languages of Europe, evincing the wide extent of the domain in which the game was practiced. In many tongues these derivatives are still in use. It is an important fact that Greece, Turkey and the other nationalities (even those in which the Arabic tongue is the medium of intercourse), which lie along the shores of the eastern Mediterranean, adopted the Latin name for backgammon, whereas they all call chess by a more or less corrupted form of its Arabic appellation. In a later time, in some countries, fashion or other accidental cause, made one particular variety of tables so prominent that the old name as a general term, went out of vogue, and the name of the popular variety took its place. Thus the variety styled *todas tablas* in Spain in the XIIIth century, which involved the carrying of all the men around all the tables back to their original starting-point, became the principal and favorite form of the game in England, and in that land, during the XVth or XVIth century, the appellation *backgammon* (that is, "back game") came into universal use, and *tables* was forgotten. In the German nationalities it can hardly be said that any general modern name for the game as yet exists, the two or three principal varieties each having its own special appellation. The same is true of the Scandinavian lands. They have lost the word *tables*, but have not supplied its place.

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(Abbreviations: A. S. = Anglo-Saxon; Alph. cod. *or* Alph. MS. = Alphonsine codex; Arab. = Arabic; B. M. cod. = British Museum codex; B. S. cod. = Bonus Socius codex; Boh. = Bohemian; C. B. cod. = Civis Bononiæ codex; Cat. = Catalan; cf. = confer; Chin. = Chinese; Dan. = Danish; Engl. = English; Flem. = Flemish; Fr. = French; Germ. = German; Holst. dial. = Holstein dialect; Hung. = Hungarian; Icel. = Icelandic; Ind. = Indian; Ital. = Italian; Jap. = Japanese; Lat. = Latin; M. Engl. = Middle English; M. Gr. = Modern Greek; M. H. G. = Middle High German; M. Lat. = Mediæval Latin; O. Engl. = Old English; O. Fr. = Old French; O. Fris. = Old Frisian; O. Germ. = Old German; O. H. G. = Old High German; Pers. = Persian; pl. = plural; Pol. = Polish; Port. = Portugese; Prov. = Provençal; Russ. = Russian; Sansk. = Sanskrit; Siam. = Siamese; sing. = singular; Span. = Spanish; Swed. = Swedish; Turk. = Turkish.

The characters *ä*, *æ*, *å*, are to be found under *a*, *ö* under *o*, and *ü* under *u*. The Icelandic letter *þ* is to be found at the end of the index.)

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»	36	»	10	*For* Dansk *read* Nordisk.
»	73	»	32-33	*Omit* and in the earlier edition (ed. Guessard, Paris 1860), also p. 88. *There is only one edition of 1860, that by Kroeber and Servois, being Vol. IV. of "Les anciens poëtes de la France" published under the direction of F. Guessard.*
»	73	»	50	*For* Goria *read* Gorra.
»	79	»	21	*For* Skakespeare's *read* Shakespeare's.
»	85	»	54	*For* Scherer *read* Scheler.
»	85	»	58	*For* Scherer *read* Scheler.
»	85	»	59	*For* Scherer *read* Scheler.
»	88	»	1	*For* todas, tablas *read* todas tablas.
»	88	»	1-2	*For* la bufa, cortesia *read* la bufa cortesia.
»	90	»	18-19	*For* Lacarda *read* Lacerda.
»	99	»	50	*For* Gianuzlo *read* Gianuzio.
»	102	»	47	*For* Corvarrubias *read* Covarrubias.
»	122	»	13	*For* Husbibliothek *read* Handbibliothek.
»	122	»	27	*For* B. Comparetti *read* D. Comparetti.
»	128	»	3	*For* Steiler *read* Stieler.
»	140	»	25	*For* telfd *read* tefld.
»	141	»	3	*For* Drengernes *read* Drengenes.
»	141	»	16	*For* Gísli Konráðsson *read* Konráð Gislason.
»	141	»	52	*For* tre *read* trè.
»	147	»	3	*For* belejringsspel *read* belejringsspil.
»	155	»	37	*For* tófl *read* töfl.
»	155	»	50	*For* Pegar *read* Þegar.
»	155	»	50	*For* lómb *read* lömb.
»	156	»	17	*For* Rekjavik *read* Reykjavík.
»	156	»	29	*For* hnetafl *read* hnettafl.
»	157	»	28	*For* bondi *read* bóndi.
»	157	»	32	*For* huni *read* húni.
»	157	»	41	*For* huni *read* húni.
»	173	»	2	*For* p. 157 *read* p. 155.

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»	243	»	15	*For* Reimar *read* Reinmar.
»	246	»	32	*For* Simplicius *read* Simplicissimus.
»	253	»	31	*For* las quinze Tables *read* las quinze Tablas.
»	254	»	45	*For* Libro de les tablas *read* Libro de las tablas.
»	267	»	26	*For* Buch der spiel *read* Buch der spiele.
»	268	»	42	*For* skowing *read* showing.
»	269	»	3	*For* konigliche *read* königliche.
»	280	»	27	*For* Harmon *read* Horman.
»	286	»	32	*For* Osway's *read* Otway's.
»	299	»	12	*For* flyers *read* flyers.
»	309	»	15	*Omit* as now.
»	311	»	10	*For* spill-bog *read* spille-bog.
»	317	»	43	*For* upspel *read* uppspel.
»	321	»	22	*For* badå *read* båda.
»	331	»	14	*For* 1018 *read* 1118.
»	331	»	16	*For* 1281 *read* 1262.
»	333	»	47	*For* Hörgadal *read* Hörgárdal.
»	334	»	44	*For* teniningakast *read* teningakast.
»	336	»	9	*For* tafi *read* tafl.
»	336	»	24-25	*For* Formannasögur *read* Fornmannasögur.
»	336	»	35	*For* Olaf *read* Ólafr.
»	342	»	38	*For* stelpu *read* stelpur.
»	355	»	35	*For* stóri múkur *read* langi múkur.

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